

AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF LONGSHOREMEN
AND OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN THE PORT
OF ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the social organisation of longshoremen and their families and its implications for industrial relations in the Port of St. John's, Canada.

The analysis focusses on effects of an extreme in casual labour markets operating against a background of chronic unemployment. Although concentrating on activities within the port it is essential to place these within Newfoundland's geographic, economic, political and legal contexts; these accordingly form the basis of Chapter 1, which also introduces the actors.

Chapter 2 sets the longshore family within the context of Newfoundland's rurally based kinship system and shows how structural divisions and alliances derived from within the family are manifest on the dock. It demonstrates how physical strength and prestige are related and as men age, wives and sons assume familial authority.

Religion is examined in Chapter 3 as providing a social bond for pious women through whom are allocated scarce resources, both economic and social. Economic resources, as collectively organised welfare payments, are offered in cases of family misfortune, whilst piety permits social mobility of children. Mothers are thus able to alleviate some disadvantages of a father's low class occupation.

Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 concentrate on the longshore work gang as basic unit of work and leisure. Chapter 4 examines how gang workers cooperate and emerge able collectively to modify the foreman's apparently absolute powers in hiring,

firing and discipline. The methods by which collective opposition is mounted and prior structural divisions overcome are analysed through an extended case study, the subject of Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 examines how pilferage is organised in the docks; analyses alliances and dependencies involved and the institutionalised limits set. It then considers implications of limits as an aspect of longshore morality and an indication of managerial collusion.

The articulation of gang organisation derived from work and that found in leisure activities is considered in Chapter 7. The gang is examined as an insurance agency parallel to women's organisations discussed in Chapter 3. Integration and membership within gangs is derived from conformity to work and sociability norms - particularly in drinking. Relationships within drinking groups are then considered in detail. Some men, outsiders to these norms, are found in the gangs; their special role as gang spokesmen against management is considered as they articulate with the Union's political life.

Chapter 8 considers Union political activity and relations with employers together. Membership participation is constrained by divisive aspects of membership and Union structure. These are moveable when preconditions allow cross wharf alliances. Resulting turbulence can be focussed on Executives or through them to Employers. In the concluding chapter I briefly summarise the argument.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Newfoundland and St. John's : Physical Features
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5. The Historical and Economic Background to Industrial Relations
6. Casual and Decasualised Hiring of Dock Labour

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of social relationships in the Port of St. John's when I worked there in 1962-4. The City of St. John's, however, like all other cities, has a physical inheritance, a wider social environment and a history, all of which have influenced the form of social relationships found within it. Accordingly, it will be necessary to delineate these before any detailed discussion of social relationships can be attempted.

1. Newfoundland and St. John's : Physical Features

The island of Newfoundland lies between 47 and 52 degrees latitude, is triangular in shape and is the most easterly part of the North American continent. Geologically it is similar to the New England States of the U.S.A., the Maritime Provinces of Canada and the coastal shelf known as the Newfoundland Grand Banks. These areas, largely formed of pre-cambrian rock, have seen several periods of mountain building, erosional levelling and heavy glaciation. The island's relief is, therefore, rugged and is marked by a series of ridges extending Northeast to Southwest. With the melting of glacial ice the surface was left covered in deposits of sands and gravels, soils which resulted are highly acid, infertile and rocky.

On the Southeast corner of the island lies the Avalon Peninsular, the most heavily populated part of Newfoundland and site of the Provincial Capital, St. John's. This peninsular, about 100 miles long by 60 miles wide, has an elevation of between 500 and 1,000 feet and is heavily indented by a number of deep bays, drowned valleys and fiords. As a result, no part of the Peninsular lies more than 12 miles from the sea.

St. John's lies at the northeastern edge of the Peninsular. "Of its immediate site the most striking feature is the rocky and hilly terrain. To a large extent this has greatly influenced the development of the city. It has dictated a pattern of steep and erratic street layout and particularly in the older part of the city, a compact and dense housing development.

"The topography of St. John's consists mainly of three parallel ridges aligned N.E./S.W. which enclose two valleys. The first valley, largely submerged, contains the harbour and this is protected from the Atlantic by a coastal ridge 700 feet high known as the Southside Hills. The ridge is broken by an 800 foot wide channel giving entrance to the harbour known as the Narrows. The harbour which is one of the finest in eastern North America varies in width from 100 feet to 2,200 feet and is some 6,000 feet long."⁽¹⁾

The principal part of old St. John's is built as a second ridge rising steeply from the harbour which flattens out at about 300 feet before dipping into a second valley.

It is this second valley which has been developed as St. John's has expanded since the Second World War. St. John's is, therefore, marked by strong contrasts: the old part of the city, around the harbour, being characterised by steep streets and a heavy concentration of old style traditional clapboard houses; whilst the newer section is much flatter, less densely settled and looks like any modern North American small town suburb.

2. Climate

Newfoundland's climate is dominated by the sea and particularly by the cold Labrador current. This current, flowing by the Island's east and southern coasts, moderates summer temperatures which result in coastal areas having short cool summers; in St. John's this gives a mean summer temperature as low as 55°F. In winter, pack ice around the coasts tends to keep temperatures low, though the freezing up of St. John's harbour is a rarity. The city's mean monthly winter temperature is 25°F and though, in a winter, there may well be frequent thaws the annual snowfalls still average 100 inches a year.

Annual precipitation in the island is high and in St. John's this reaches 55 inches a year - more than twice the level reached, for instance, in London. Its distribution is fairly even, though much of it is deposited as fog during the summer. This derives from warm moist air above the Gulf Stream⁽²⁾ flowing over the cold Labrador current and

it results in frequent disruption to transport services - particularly of air transport into St. John's⁽³⁾.

3. History, Economics and Population

Newfoundland's economic history can best be understood as following at different times responses to two opposed patterns of development - those earlier ones encouraging growth on the eastern side of the island nearest to England and others, which came later, and which encouraged rival growth in the island's Western areas. As a result, St. John's, at the island's Eastern extremity, grew as the first influences were predominant and it has been in relative decline since the turn of the last century when opposing influences favouring the other side of the island have gradually become paramount.

St. John's owes its name to the accident of its discovery by John Cabot on St. John's Day in 1497. It assumed the role of capital of Newfoundland when Sir Humphrey Gilbert, at a ceremony there in 1583, declared the island to be an English possession. It remained, however, a small summer station for visiting European vessels for close to 200 years.

Newfoundland owes its early development to the exploitation of a single resource - fish, and particularly codfish. The low continental shelf to the east of the island is well-known as a fertile breeding area for cod, and has been so exploited by centuries of fishermen. Brooks,

in 1782, observed " ... there are 4 or 500 English families who continue there all the year ... (BUT) In the fishing season it is resorted to by at least 10,000 people every year on account of the fishing banks to the E. of this island, for here they cure the cod, which is carried, not only to England but to all parts of Europe."

This trade was dominated by English West Country merchants and through their influence on the British Parliament they succeeded in maintaining their monopoly by virtually prohibiting permanent settlement until the end of the eighteenth century. Cod fishing, in fact, became subject to British Mercantile policy fostered in opposition particularly to the French and considered unsuitable for colonial exploitation⁽⁴⁾.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the power of the West Country Merchants declined and these policies were gradually relaxed. In 1817 edicts prohibiting settlement were formally repealed and the population of Newfoundland quickly began to rise. In 1804, the resident population of the Island was 20,300; by 1816 it had reached 52,600, and by 1836 was 75,000⁽⁵⁾.

Most of this population growth was centred on land adjacent to the fishing banks on the Eastern side of the Island - particularly in the Avalon Peninsular and, within that area, predominantly on St. John's.

St. John's had many advantages favouring its early growth. Since it was located close to the fishing grounds

it early became the principal fishing port of the Island. Its harbour was its principal natural advantage: it provided excellent shelter, was largely ice free and was also the Island's closest point to England, to which not only governmental but especially economic activities were closely linked. As Brookes described the situation in 1782, "There is great plenty of venison, fish and fowls but very little corn fruit or cattle, upon which account the inhabitants have not only their cloaths and furniture, but provisions from England."

Because the port of St. John's controlled Newfoundland's external trade the city came, therefore, also to control internal trade and it rapidly grew to be the main distributive centre for the Island.

St. John's was further favoured in its early development by a concomitant hindrance to growth on the Central and Western side of the Island, a situation which was to continue down until the turn of the nineteenth century. Philbrook has remarked:

"France was the main contestant to English supremacy on the island but she gradually lost influence before the English, and by the Peace of Utrecht (1713) retained only the rights to fish and dry fish on the shores of Northern Newfoundland between Cape Bonavista on the East and Point Riche on the West. ... Because English and Newfoundland fishermen were (later) making use of Bonavista and Notre Dame Bays, France (then) gave up her fishing rights to this area by treaty (1783) in return for the right to dry

fish on the entire west coast of the island. The new treaty limits were from Cape St. John to Cape Ray on the southwest. Further, England was forced to declare that no settlements were to be allowed on the "French Shore".⁽⁶⁾

Rothney has pointed out how this limitation was to affect the whole course of Newfoundland's development for the next 100 years - "the development of the Western part of the island containing the land most suitable for agriculture, which would have tended to turn Newfoundland towards the other British North American possessions, was delayed until France gave up her right to use that coast under the terms of the Entente Cordiale of 1904." (Rothney, 1964).

Meanwhile, the factors favouring development of Eastern Newfoundland in general and of St. John's in particular were still operative.

By 1832 representative government was established centred on St. John's which gave some local control over the collection and allocation of finances. Further independence was granted in 1855 when Newfoundland was granted Independent Dominion status and political moves were then made to confederate with the newly established federal Dominion of Canada. This opportunity, however, was not to be taken for another 100 years. A new political party, established in 1860, based on St. John's and dedicated to non-confederation routed all opposition. Newfoundland still faced towards the East.

Whitaker (1967) has remarked on the results of this failure to confederate as follows: "The failure of

Newfoundland to join in the Canadian Confederation at the time this was being set up about one hundred years ago, and its subsequent status as an independent Dominion separated from Canada not merely by water but also by tariff barriers, and her non-participation in the rapid process of economic development that followed the linking of Upper and Lower Canada in one vast unit that was ultimately to stretch from one ocean to another, led to Newfoundland becoming something of a Colonial backwater, in spite of her boast of being the oldest British Colony and one of the earliest territories of the New World settled by Europeans."

The latter decades of the nineteenth century were, nevertheless, marked by ambitious, if on the whole unsuccessful, plans for economic development. Amongst the most significant of these, however, though it was to prove financially disastrous - not least for the government - were proposals for building the trans-insular railway which was finally completed in 1898. With the turn of the century and a railway network now on the far side of the Island, the balance of economic power was to begin its shift westward.

Copes comments:

"It was not until the turn of the century that the almost exclusive importance of economic development in the eastern extremities of our island - as opposed to the central and western areas - was discernibly challenged. At that time completion of the transinsular railway gave extensive areas outside the eastern peninsulas improved communications with domestic and foreign markets, while the limitation of "French Shore" treaty rights liberated the West Coast from the disabilities under which it had long laboured. Economic

progress did not take long to follow. Within a few decades two great pulp and paper operations were established and large scale mineral developments were commenced. In the traditional fisheries, the central and western areas had been gradually increasing their share of the output since the early decades of the nineteenth century. In comparison, the resources of the Avalon Peninsula began to look rather meagre. Apart from Bell Island iron ore, the only significant natural resources of this latter region were the fisheries, and their comparative importance in the Island's economy was gradually diminishing." (Copes, 1961, p. 18.)

Copes perhaps overestimates the effects of these developments at that time. Newfoundland's attempts at economic development in the first third of this century were markedly unsuccessful. During the worldwide slump of the inter-war years the Island's fiscal situation became so serious that the Legislative Assembly voted to relinquish self government and to place her affairs directly in charge of the British Parliament who ruled for sixteen years through a Seven Man Commission headed by the Island's Governor. Nonetheless, as the last century proceeded population statistics reveal a steady drift of influence westward. In 1836 72.9% of Newfoundland's population lived in the Avalon Peninsular. By 1956 this figure had fallen to 41.2%.

The population of St. John's both rose absolutely and fell relatively in parallel with that of the Avalon Peninsular. In 1836 17.8% of Newfoundland's population lived in the city; by 1959 the percentage had fallen to 12.8%. It should be emphasised, however, that in absolute

terms the population both of the Avalon Peninsular and of St. John's has continued to grow.

"The increase for St. John's, however, has grown more than the figures for the city indicate. The excess growth, unable to be contained within the city limits, has spilled over into the surrounding areas, so that counts for the Metropolitan Area (as defined by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics) have more meaning. In 1956, the Metropolitan Area recorded a population of 77,991 persons, 18.8 per cent of the Newfoundland total." (Urban Renewal Study, p. 12.)

During the Second World War the Americans used Newfoundland as a base; they built several sites on the Island including a special dock at St. John's which was manned by 100 of the city's longshoremen, and these activities largely bolstered the island's economy. After the war, with the removal of most of these sites, the whole question of Newfoundland's political affiliation was once again raised. In 1948, after two national referendums and by a slim majority of 52%, the people of Newfoundland finally decided to confederate with Canada as her 10th Province.

4. Newfoundland and St. John's After Confederation

Political confederation, coming nearly 100 years after it was first mooted, served to emphasise St. John's' position as being on the "wrong" side of the island. To quote Copes again

"It cannot be denied that the westward shift in our external economic relations in some basic respects has rendered the position of St. John's less favourable. ... Port-aux-Basques and Corner Brook have quicker communication through less

expensive transportation links with the Canadian Mainland than we do ... it is probably not greatly inaccurate to say that as a result of Confederation Mainland Canada became the supplier of 65-80 percent of our imports instead of 50 percent."

Copes continues,

"St. John's is in a preferred geographical position only to receive those imports coming from the United Kingdom"

and though he points out that St. John's is not at any geographical disadvantage in receiving cargo from the United States Atlantic seaboard, nonetheless,

"with the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway it may be expected an increasing share of our imports from the industrial Midwest of the United States will be routed through Mainland Canada putting St. John's again at a locational disadvantage as compared to the westerly parts of Newfoundland".

He adds that,

"Another pertinent consideration is that even if Newfoundland had not been brought inside the Canadian tariff wall, Canada was likely to become an increasingly important supplier of Newfoundland, as industrial expansion gradually improved Canada's competitive strength vis-a-vis the United States." (7).

Confederation with Canada, then, confirmed a trend which had been continuing since the turn of the last century. It brought a reorientation of economic activities from east to west of the island which adversely affected the position of St. John's. It further brought, however, an increase in prosperity by increasing real incomes at a rate greater than Newfoundland had ever previously experienced and in

which inevitably St. John's was to share. In the ten years since Confederation the per capita income of Newfoundland rose by 78 per cent⁽⁸⁾, 20 per cent higher than the figure for the rest of Canada. Copes estimates that this represented an increase in real living standards of one-third.

This assessment, though representing a considerable increase, would still leave Newfoundland well behind the rest of Canada. In per capita terms Newfoundland's income in the ten years since 1949 has never exceeded 57% of Canada's. When compared with the most economically backward part of Mainland Canada - The Maritime Provinces - its per capita income has still been at least 20% lower than theirs⁽⁹⁾. No per capita income figures are available for St. John's. The St. John's urban renewal study assumed, however, that the figure "... will resemble the Newfoundland average",⁽¹⁰⁾ and in consequence that it must be one of the lowest for any city in Canada. When this is placed alongside the cost of living in St. John's which is variously estimated as being from 10% to 25%⁽¹¹⁾ higher than on the Mainland, the extent of the predicament facing the island and its capital is apparent.

It should not be surprising in view of the foregoing that a sizeable proportion of Newfoundland's per capita income is derived from Federal (Canadian) transfer payments and that it is these which have largely contributed to the increased living standards enjoyed since Confederation. In 1949 they represented 12 per cent of Newfoundland incomes;

by 1959 this figure had risen to 20 per cent⁽¹²⁾. In particular, they involve family allowances and unemployment benefits.

The scale of these benefits can perhaps better be appreciated when it is understood that Newfoundland's birth rate and average family size are both higher than that of any other Canadian Province. In 1956 the average Newfoundland family comprised 4.6 people whilst the Canadian national average was only 3.8⁽¹³⁾. Family size was however lower in Metropolitan St. John's⁽¹⁴⁾ where in 1959 it was 4.3⁽¹⁵⁾. There is no difference in this respect between Catholic and Protestant family size.

These large family sizes are one reflection of the provinces extremely high birth rate which climbed from 13.6 in 1936 to reach 33.0 per thousand in 1959⁽¹⁶⁾. Birth rates at this level are comparable with figures more usually obtained from Asian and Middle Eastern countries and must certainly be amongst the highest for N. America. Together with outward adult migration and minimal immigration the high birth rate for the province "has the effect of 'skewing' the population pyramid ... so that over 40% of the population are under fourteen, and the majority of the population have been borne in the province since Confederation"⁽¹⁷⁾. In St. John's the figure is slightly lower; 36.3 per cent of the city's population were under fourteen in 1959⁽¹⁸⁾.

As well as considerable benefits accruing from the Federal Family Allowance Scheme, the province also has the

unfortunate distinction of having by far the highest rate of unemployment in Canada and accordingly, therefore, 'enjoys' disproportionate unemployment benefits. The summer unemployment rate in Newfoundland approximates to the winter rate for Canada as a whole, while winter rates in the province are two to three times Canadian winter averages⁽¹⁹⁾; they reached 31 and 30 per cent respectively in 1959 and 1960. Copes believes that even these high figures are underestimates, stating that,

"... the D.B.S. unemployment figures ignore a great deal of unemployment or at least of 'under-employment'. It would appear that on an average weekday during the peak of the unemployment season in Newfoundland little more than half of our working people are actually at work." (20)

In addition to welfare payments, Confederation brought the benefit of Central Government subsidies, particularly as these applied to transport. Some of these were of direct benefit to St. John's, such as the \$18M grant for the St. John's harbour development, completed in 1963. On the other hand, half the annual Canadian National Railway subsidy to its Newfoundland Division, amounting to \$10M, has supported services between Nova Scotian ports and ports in Western Newfoundland⁽²¹⁾, while federal support for the Newfoundland section of the Trans-Canada Highway has further aided these western ports to develop distribution hinterlands at the expense of St. John's.

A further result of Confederation was the introduction of Federal Labour Legislation, which is outlined in Appendix 5.

5. The Historical and Economic Background to Industrial Relations

The Longshoremen's Protective Union (L.S.P.U.) of St. John's was established on the 16th May 1903 and members are very proud of the fact that it is one of the oldest labour organisations in Newfoundland. It early established a closed shop for all labour on the waterfront, including hiring foremen, and it particularly prides itself on having developed independently of external influences. This is one reason why, in spite of obvious advantages, it had never - until 1968 - affiliated with other organisations, either outside or inside Newfoundland, or even within St. John's⁽²²⁾.

Before 1939 there were no written agreements between the L.S.P.U. and the Port employers. Relations between the two parties had been covered by a set of Union rules which were agreed to and amended at Union meetings. These rules were then notified to employers and put into operation by the Union, although in some cases the employers challenged rules as being unreasonable, restrictive and causing unnecessary delay to shipping and in some instances obtained modifications or cancellation by discussion. There has never been a viable joint committee regularly meeting to discuss matters of mutual concern to the two sides or to

provide anticipatory conciliation machinery.

This state of affairs proved unsatisfactory to the employers who formed an association, the Newfoundland Employers Association Limited, which aimed to obtain a clearer and more regular basis by means of a signed agreement specifying rates of pay and conditions of work. It was only intervention by the Commission Government, however worried about delays to shipping affecting the war effort, which paved the way for a collective agreement between the parties, and in December 1939 the first agreement was signed.

It is generally agreed that the ten years from 1939 to 1949 proved to be the Union's 'heyday': according to the Local Labour Officer "they would come out at the drop of a hat". Union strength was largely achieved because of usual conditions favourable to labour during war-time. The Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1940 provided for intervention in any dispute affecting the defence of Newfoundland, the maintenance of public order, or the efficient conduct of the war. Strikes and lockouts were prohibited unless 21 days' notice of intention was given. The Government was then empowered to appoint a Trade Dispute Board with authority to hand down a legally binding decision. As a result, during the balance of the war years, when Newfoundland's position close to Europe made it a valuable trans-shipment port, there was an abundance of work available and comparative harmony which continued until 1948.

Resistance by the employers in 1948 to Union demands for wage increases precipitated a strike which was resolved to the considerable advantage of the Union.

During the 1950's, the pre-eminence of the L.S.P.U. began a marked decline as economic conditions moved sharply against it. As well as the direct effects of Confederation derived from tariff removals, the growth of alternative ports and St. John's adverse physical situation, a further damaging blow to the Union during this period came with the Province's change over from coal to oil in domestic heating. As Canadian companies made deeper inroads into Newfoundland, so it became inevitable that more and more households made the conversions. Since coal was handled exclusively by hand whilst oil is unloaded by pump and transported by pipeline, the amount of work lost to St. John's longshoremen was considerable⁽²³⁾.

Union members were further hit in 1960 by closure of the U.S.A.F. base at Pepperil close to St. John's. The U.S. authorities had constructed a special dock for the base which employed over 100 Union men. After the closure many of these men joined the ever-growing pool of "outside men" for whose labour there existed only a spasmodic demand.

The collective result of these individual setbacks was that St. John's, in relative decline as a port (compared with other of the Island's ports since the turn of the century) was now to suffer an absolute decline in the tonnage of cargoes handled. Copes in 1961 stated: "The City is

no longer holding its own as a port. Its traffic since 1950 has not kept up with the City's general economic expansion, and since the late fifties, its port activity has actually been in decline."⁽²⁴⁾

This combination of economic ills, besides affecting the viability of St. John's as a port and having a concomitant effect on longshore employment⁽²⁵⁾, also had profound effects on the employers. Their Association, The Newfoundland Employers Association Ltd - a loose-knit federation set up to negotiate collectively with the Union - had been bedevilled by internal dissent since its inception. To a large extent this was to be expected since most of its members were competitors for a limited amount of trade. Indeed, it was not uncommon for disputes between employers to become manifest even at Union/Management negotiation meetings.

By 1958, however, because of these adverse economic factors, the number of employers of longshore labour had declined⁽²⁶⁾. Some 20 of the smaller companies either no longer used St. John's or had, since 1948, gone out of business. This left the N.E.A.L. dominated by less than half-a-dozen firms who, faced by an obviously declining situation, were able for the first time to present a united front to the Union. The fruits of their new solidarity first became evident in 1958 when they successfully organised their first lockout. After six weeks the Union sued for peace, and since that time the balance of power has been firmly in favour of the employers.

The fifties and sixties, then, were a time of marked economic deterioration for the port in which the Union, for the first time, was confronted by a group of united employers. With this decline of St. John's economically, came a period of political turbulence for the Union which reached remarkable levels.

From Confederation, and until 1956, the Union's political life had been extremely stable: one President remained in post, and at elections the Executive was usually returned by acclamation or with at most two of nine seats contested. Union Minutes rarely give figures of voting in the Executive, but there are frequent references to unanimous votes during the period.

In the twelve years, from 1956 to 1968, however, four separate Presidents held office, whilst seven of the Executive's nine members on two occasions resigned en bloc. Twice, when contracts were renegotiated with employers, a majority of members voted to reject their executive's proposals. In 1956, 1958 and again in 1964, the Executive was pressed to obtain greater benefits than it thought possible, and on two occasions this led to lockouts - with the Union finally succumbing on each occasion to a humiliating settlement and to the loss of many previous gains. As a result, between 1958 and 1965 the size of gangs was progressively reduced from 32 to 21 men and the weight in sling loads increased from 1200 to 2000 lbs⁽²⁷⁾.

In parallel with this series of economic disasters came a marked decline in the social position and activities

of the L.S.P.U.

Perhaps the peak of the Union's power and prestige had been symbolised in 1953 by the Union's 50th Anniversary Dinner held at the fashionable Old Colony Club. The guest list comprised most of the capital's political and industrial establishment, including both the Acting Prime Minister of the Province and the Leader of the Opposition. Present too were the Chief Justice, the Minister of Labour, the Mayor of St. John's, and managers and directors of all leading companies which employed longshoremen together with the Presidents of the city's leading labour unions.

Each year during the early and mid fifties, the Union organised outings for its members, which involved the hiring of a complete train and the giving of Complimentary Dinners to honour contestants in various Union athletic teams. Rowing crews, horseshoe throwing and tug-of-war teams were fielded against representatives of other Unions and of Church groups. Membership in these teams was much prized, and one indication of their prestige was that members of the L.S.P.U. enjoying dual membership in both Church and Union teams would accept their primary loyalty as due to the Union, and would represent it on occasions even against their own Church.

After the 1958 lockout the Union held no more team activities and beanfeasts ceased, whilst the Union's diamond jubilee in 1963 was unmarked by celebrations of any kind.

6. Casual and Decasualised Hiring of Dock Labour

Ports throughout the world face a common problem in their management of labour. The problem arises from an unequal demand for labour over time; which, in its turn, is due to the erratic arrival of ships. This erraticism is enhanced in those ports which service a high proportion of deep-sea shipping.

If vessels could be made to arrive at a port in a regular sequence, like cars on a factory conveyor belt, then many problems concerning dock labour would disappear. Longshoremen, like most industrial workers, would then be able to tell from day to day what the demand for their labour would be, and managements could plan their labour demands for periods of longer than a day or two. But vessels do not arrive in port to tight schedules. They are affected by tides, by seasons and by the weather so that, unlike the demand for factory labour which is fairly consistent, the demand for dock labour is necessarily erratic and unpredictable.

Not only can the demand for dock labour be regarded as atypical in an industrial setting, but the economics of shipping have commonly encouraged a labour surplus to develop which has come to be regarded as normal in many of the world's ports. This arises because the vessels themselves represent large capital investments. It is, therefore, necessary for them to be intensively worked since it is expensive if they remain idle even for short periods:

depreciation costs on even a medium-sized vessel can often amount to several thousand dollars a day. In addition, maintenance fees and salaries necessarily continue to be paid whilst a vessel remains in port. Thus, even a short delay in loading or discharge on any one voyage can very easily tip the scales of cost for that voyage from profit into loss⁽²⁸⁾.

It is because of this crucial importance of the time a vessel spends in port that employers have always aimed to ensure access to an adequate supply of labour even in peak work conditions and, correspondingly, they have tended to encourage the maintenance of a larger labour force than is needed for normal working. Thus, to the problem of erratic work in docks is added the further characteristic so traditionally associated with dock labour: an insufficiency of work when the demand for labour is considered beyond the short term.

It can thus be appreciated that nearly all ports share common difficulties associated with their labour forces. The social and labour problems that arise when an overlarge body of men is in competition for too little work, and when this work is both erratic and insecure, have been documented by many observers. As well as trade unionists and social welfare workers, Governments and enlightened managers also have come to see that unless such competition for work is controlled it is likely to be dysfunctional for efficient working⁽²⁹⁾.

There are various ways of restricting competition

for or ameliorating the effects of casual work in docks, and this removal of the casual element has been termed the 'decasualisation' of dock labour. Full decasualisation involves two requirements. Firstly, the number of men offering themselves for work must be limited. Secondly, the available work must be rotated amongst the men so that wide disparities in income do not occur. In addition, men may be paid a basic wage if they present themselves for work and this is not available.

In describing the operation of the hiring system on the West Coast of the U.S.A. Larrowe states,

"In West Coast Ports, the industry has been administered with the conscious aim of keeping the waterfront free of the chaos and abuses usually found where men are hired on a casual basis. Longshoremen in each West Coast port are registered in a central hiring hall; they are picked for jobs in rotation so that their earnings can be kept equal; and the halls are closely policed by the employers and the Union to prevent violations of the elaborate rules laid down for assigning men to jobs. Thus, longshoremen on the West Coast work with as much regularity as workers in other industries." (Larrowe, 1955, p. 83)

This system contains the essence of decasualisation, since it involves a restriction on labour supply, rotation of work and a basic minimum payment offered to men who present themselves for work but who fail to obtain it.

With the benefits of full decasualisation, the reputation of the West Coast ports became enhanced in shipping circles; strikes and stoppages were reduced and industrial relations improved. In 1960, by the now famous

productivity deal known as the West Coast Agreement, the employers agreed to "buy the book" for \$25M over five years. Restrictive practices were reduced and mechanisation increased. R.B. Oram, writing in 1965, states, "... the agreement has, since 1960, worked well. The proof lies in the higher standards of despatch already achieved...". (Oram, 1965, p. 52)

Where all of these elements of amelioration or restriction are absent, as they are in St. John's, then the hiring system may be described as casual. Under these circumstances men are allocated to work by some variation of the "shape up". Larrowe describes the operation of a typical shape up system which existed in New York.

"Under the traditional hiring system, longshoremen seeking work "shaped up" each morning at the docks where they usually worked. They waited in the street until a hiring foreman came out of the door of the pier warehouse and blew his whistle, then formed a horseshoe (shape) around him. From this group - which typically outnumbered the available jobs - he picked the men for the day's work. Men who were picked in the "shape up" were guaranteed only four hours work."

Larrowe continues,

"Whatever form the shape-up took, the power in the hands of the person doing the hiring - whether hiring boss, gang foreman, or union official - is apparent. In any casual-labour market, the chronic surplus of labour, the low earnings of most workers, and the intense competition for jobs combine to give the man in charge of hiring extraordinary power." (Larrowe, 1955, p. 52)

St. John's can be said to operate the extreme of casual hiring procedures. Though men are hired usually for the full period of a boat this is often less than four

hours, though a single hiring can on occasion provide over 20 hours work. There are also no payments for attendance though the Union, benefitting from its operation of a closed shop, ceased all recruitment in 1956.

What appears to have been missed by most commentators discussing casual hiring through the shape up is, however, the regulatory practices which, it is reasonable to assume may well develop - either spontaneously through men themselves offering some form of collective opposition in their work groupings to such apparently unbridled hiring power - or the actions of the Unions in this direction. These are topics discussed in later chapters of this thesis.

Footnotes to Chapter 1

- (1) Urban Renewal Study, City of St. John's, Newfoundland, from which much of this section is taken.
- (2) Lake, 1952, p. 90.
- (3) Copes, 1961, p. 73.
- (4) Innis, H.A., 1954.
- (5) 10th Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1935.
- (6) Rothney, 1964, p. 18 and The French Shore Problem.
- (7) Copes, 1961, pp. 20-21.
- (8) D.B.S. National Accounts Income and Expenditure 1949-59. Tables 28-29. Figures for St. John's are not available.
- (9) D.B.S. National Accounts Income and Expenditure 1949-59. Tables 28, 29, 34, 35.

- (10) St. John's Urban Renewal Study, p. 10.
- (11) This difference in living costs is largely accounted for by high transport charges due to the remoteness of Newfoundland from the production centres of N. America. See:
 - (a) Report of the Newfoundland Royal Commission On The Cost of Living in Newfoundland, St. John's, 1950
 - (b) Howland, R.D. Some Regional Aspects of Canada's Economic Development, 1957, and particularly
 - (c) Report of the Newfoundland Royal Commission for the Preparation of the Case of the Government of Newfoundland for the Revision of the Financial Terms of Union, pp. 119-123.
 - (d) Copes, 1961, Appendix B.
- (12) D.B.S. National Accounts. Income & Expenditure 1949-59. Tables 28, 29, 34, 35.
- (13) D.B.S. Estimates of Families in Canada, 1957. Table 1.
- (14) The term "Metropolitan St. John's" includes settled areas of the city legally outside the city's limits.
- (15) City of St. John's. Urban Renewal Study, Table 9, p. 13.
- (16) D.B.S. Canada Year Book 1961 (Ottawa : Queens Printer 1961), p. 204, Table 1.
- (17) Whitaker, 1967.
- (18) City of St. John's. Urban Renewal Study, Table 8.
- (19) See D.B.S. The Labour Force, 1958-60, Table 12, and Reference Papers 58, pp. 120-151 and 180.
- (20) Copes, 1961.
- (21) Copes, 1961, p. 146. Note 8E.
- (22) The L.S.P.U. is unusual among longshore Unions in that until 1968 it persistently refused to affiliate with any other bodies - whether in the longshore field or outside it. At different times it had been approached but had refused to affiliate to the St. John's Trade Council, to other Newfoundland Labour Organisations, to other Newfoundland longshore Unions and to Mainland Union Federations.

In part, this policy of isolation comes from a distrust of Mainland Unions which is part of a

common Newfoundland distrust of any connection with Mainland Canada. The isolationism of the L.S.P.U., however, is also a product of a deeply felt belief in the value of its own autonomy. "We'd have to do what they tell us to do" was a common answer to questions about affiliation. This was manifest as a contempt for other Unions in the city which lacked the facilities the L.S.P.U. offered its members and which it was feared the L.S.P.U. might have to share if affiliation occurred. "No one else has a Union hall like ours", I was told. "If we joined the Trades Council they'd all be after using our hall."

Non affiliation can be seen as a response to the social isolation, firstly of longshoremen within the city (Kerr and Siegel, 1954), and secondly to their physical isolation from the mainland which is shared by other Newfoundlanders (Paris, 1966, pp. 58-62). The isolation of a longshore Union which refuses to affiliate with other similar Unions can, however, have very serious consequences. During a lockout or a strike employers have only to divert cargoes to a nearby port and they can then truck it directly to the city. This was a policy they adopted during a lockout in 1958, and which they successfully re-applied in 1964. As a result of this defeat, the Union, in 1968, affiliated with the International Longshoremen's Association.

- (23) In terms of tons unloaded the amount of coal docked in St. John's during the years 1956-8 was almost half the tonnage of general cargo (Copes, 1961). Table 9.7. By 1965 this had reduced to an eighth (Harkness, 1969, p. 106). All figures relevant to the Port of St. John's prior to 1965 are, however, suspect since it was only in that year that detailed records began to be kept. See Harkness, 1969, p. 26, Fn. 17.
- (24) Copes, 1961.
- (25) It is reported that
 "A brief prepared by the St. John's shipping companies in 1959 for submission to the McTague Royal Commission on Transportation reported that nearly 10 percent of the people of St. John's were directly dependent on the shipping industry for their livelihood. In fact the discharge of cargoes on the waterfront created the largest private payroll in the city. It was the sole means of earning a living for 1,000 longshoremen

who received more than \$2,500,000 a year in wages. It created 176 full-time jobs with various commercial companies in the city. The waterfront operations provided 50 percent of the work of 48 trucking companies who employed another 225 men." (Harkness, 1969, p. 34).

By 1964 only some 500 longshoremen were still employed and the average wage of regularly employed men had dropped only some four-fifths of what it had been in 1959. It should be noted, however, that there are always considerable difficulties in computing the size of a casual labour force and these figures must be accepted with caution.

There are also difficulties in obtaining valid comparisons of longshore incomes compared to other comparable incomes in the city. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics does not differentiate longshoremen from a wider category of transport workers, many of whom are self employed in St. John's. In addition, D.B.S. banding categories have tended to be too wide for useful comparisons when the low levels of Newfoundland incomes are considered. Though in 1951 the D.B.S. used \$500 bandings, by 1961 these have been replaced by bandings of \$1,000. (See D.B.S. Census of Canada 1951, Vol. V, Table 22, and D.B.S. Canada Yearbooks, 1951 and 1961, Tables 10 and 11.)

It was possible, however, to ask people with experience of labour relations in the city about the comparability of longshore pay. There was agreement that during the early 1950's a regularly employed longshoreman was regarded as very well paid earning some 10 percent over the going rate paid equivalent workers elsewhere in the city. By the early 1960's, however, it was well recognised that the earnings of longshoremen, even the regular men, were amongst the lowest in the city.

- (26) Harkness, 1969, p. 4.
- (27) Halifax with a sling load of 2,000 lbs. in 1958 had employed a 20 man gang whilst Montreal, at 1,500 lbs. had 14 man gangs. (Source: Evening Telegram, St. John's, 19 August 1969, p. 21.)
- (28) A U.N. Publication has stated "the ultimate purpose of reducing the turn around time of ships in ports is to achieve a reduction of costs ... (and) the term costs must be regarded as synonymous with time". The authors then state that this turn around problem "is perhaps

the most complicated and intricate problem existing in transport today." The Turn Around Time of Ships in Port, U.N., New York, 1967, p. 3.

See also Sanders, R., The Economist, London, September 14th, 1968, who estimates "in North America sixty to seventy percent of a cargo ship's operating costs are incurred in Port". (Quoted in Harkness, 1969, p. 25.)

- (29) In particular the Webbs (1971, pp. 301-33) in the 1880's, and following Mayhew writing in 1851, were horrified at the adverse social effects of such casual labour. Their writings could be said to have eventually led to the Devlin Report nearly 100 years later by which the casual element in British docks was finally eradicated.

CHAPTER 2

MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND DOCKWORK : THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN A MAN'S WORLD

1. Introduction
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CHAPTER 2MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND DOCKWORK :
THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN A MAN'S WORLD1. Introduction

Men are the focal link between the two systems of work and family relationships. There is a considerable literature discussing the mutual influence of these systems as they are mediated through the roles of husband/father and worker. Much of this is concerned with the adaptations made necessary by a man's family through his working in what Cotgrove has termed "extreme" occupations:- those that make extreme demands" (1967, p. 45)⁽¹⁾.

These extreme demands are evident in dock workers families and can be regarded as largely derived from the erratic nature of the job and its physical requirements. In this, dockwork, therefore, shares many similarities with other casual labouring occupations. For certain casual occupations such as mobile navvying the adaptation demanded is sometimes no less than complete separation of the two spheres. (Sykes, 1969.)

In St. John's, extreme demands on the social organisation of longshoremen's families can be seen to result from three types of insecurity. There is first the normal erraticism of ship arrivals which means that even regular gang members can well find themselves working for up to 20 hours at a

stretch, and for this to be followed by their having no work for a week or more. This can be considered as a normal insecurity in casualised docks.

A second type of insecurity arises from the seasonal nature of much longshore employment in St. John's. This occurs since over half of the port's shipping comes from Montreal. The freezing of the St. Lawrence River for nearly three months each year means that men earn less from this source in winter than in summer. To normal insecurity, therefore, must also be added seasonal insecurity.

Both normal and seasonal insecurity act together in St. John's to create problems for longshore families. These problems, particularly as they arise from regular monetary demands on irregular incomes, are mediated through - and therefore in their turn influence - relationships within the family. In particular, a cleavage of interests is to be expected in situations where wives are concerned with regular daily and weekly expenditure and where husbands are involved in supplying erratic income.

Superimposed on these two types of insecurity is yet a third. This, the most decisive in affecting family relationships, derives from a marked decline in earning ability of longshoremen as they become older. This "age induced" insecurity varies in its effects at different stages of the domestic cycle. Because of this, its influence can only be fully understood when the domestic cycle and the longshoremen's occupational career are considered together.

This chronic insecurity, common to dockwork, is

believed by Young and Willmott to be the basis of cooperation among kinsmen in the London docks:

'My father got me into it. You have to get a Union ticket first and then you get on the register. My father, my brother and me work in the same section, usually in the same gang. My other brother works nearby.' Before the war, we were told, fathers not only got their sons jobs but trained them too. 'They kicked their sons' arses until they did lay the ropes right. The son was the father's mate. He carried his son while he was learning, and the sons later on carried their fathers when they were old.' The men were either organised in family gangs, the oldest of them usually being the ganger in charge, or belonged to different gangs but helped their relatives when they could. There were many well-established families - in a nearby dock, one of them was, for instance, known as the 'Flying Righteen', a group of brothers and uncles with legendary sensitivity to the 'jungle drum beats which let them know a ship was coming up the Thames'. One of them at least would be at the berth seeking work before the ship docked, and, that done, would send round for his relatives to make up the gang.' (1957).

With insecurity in the St. John's dock greater than that in London (which enjoys regular year-round work), we yet find that such cooperation is markedly lacking in St. John's. Where, exceptionally, cognates are found to work together, this is regarded as particularly unusual and as only a temporary arrangement until a more satisfactory one can be made. Instead of cooperation between father and son and brother and brother we find that in St. John's a series of structural antagonisms are derived from within the family and are transferred directly to the dock where they are manifest as avoidance relationships⁽²⁾. It is evident, therefore, that family organisation must first be considered, not in isolation or as a dependent variable of occupation, but as part of the wider cultural situation found in the island and the city: we must, therefore, examine the cultural correlates associated with this form of family structure.

2. Migration and Inheritance

(a) The Movement of Women Between Communities

A pattern of virilocal marriage has been observed in Newfoundland by several authors (Paris, 1965; Szwed, 1965; Firestone, 1967) whereby women move out of their own communities and marry into those of their husbands, and where this is associated with a system of inheritance that largely excludes them from benefit. In effect, daughters are disinherited and exchanged for wives. This movement of women has operated irrespective of the religious affiliation of such communities, and one sex inheritance too appears to be a phenomenon found throughout the island.

The linkage of outport migration and inheritance is largely to be understood in terms of the constituency of outport estates. These mainly comprise indivisible houses, boats and fishing gear. Since women leave their natal areas on marriage (in the outport studies some two-thirds of wives were said to be "imported") they have, it is thought, no need for houses there and it is considered that boats and gear are the legitimate concern only of men. Accordingly, such property is passed to sons; daughters sometimes benefitting from receipt of odd domestic items but not usually receiving capital goods. The payment of dowries is unknown.

One result of this passage of capital goods to sons appears to be a structured rivalry between brothers which is built into the family situation. Brothers during their work lives perceive themselves as differentially contributing to, and on inheritance, therefore, differentially benefitting from,

a share-out of the patrilineally organised fishing enterprise. (See in particular Firestone, 1967.)

Such a pattern of inheritance also reinforces one sex migration. Whereas men tend to stay in the outports since this is where their estates are fixed women, without benefits in these estates, are freer to move. As Faris observed, "Many ... local girls go to St. John's ... to seek work ... they leave to avoid marrying a fishermen." (Faris, 1965, p. 105).

An important implication of this institutionalised population movement as it has affected St. John's is suggested by Whitaker.

"The trend for population movement from the scattered outports to the larger centres of population has not yet had time to eliminate the essentially rural origin of the great body of Newfoundlanders. Even though the proportion of urban dwellers is constantly increasing, there is still a high number of such people who themselves originate in the rural areas, and who may well be presumed to have brought with them into the expanding towns something of a rural ethic, and who perhaps also retain rural attitudes to change." (Whitaker, 1967)

As we shall see, it also appears that this constant movement to the city "recharges" rural values concerning migration and inheritance as these are related to the different circumstances of the city.

(b) The Place of St. John's In The Pattern of Migration and Inheritance

Whitaker, though not discussing one sex migration or inheritance as factors influencing population movement,

sees St. John's as integral in a system of migration starting in the outports and ending on the Mainland.

"In a series of experiments that I conducted among students at the Memorial University of Newfoundland little more than 1.5% had grandparents who all originated in an urban population. Even in the population of St. John's it would appear that there is no numerous long-term residential element. I am led to hypothesise, without being able to back this up empirically, that past population movements within the island have often been of the two-stage variety. The first move might be from the rural areas into the provincial capital, and the second stage, often after the lapse of a generation, might lead the migrant beyond the island. In this way the recently urbanised population of St. John's would be constantly syphoned off, a process which in some measure has led to the delayed development of the capital." (Whitaker, 1967.)

Analysis of the questionnaire data (Appendix 3.Q.51) certainly supports Whitaker's hypothesis on two-stage migration and also appears to support the argument of a 'rural ethic' operating in other ways. Of the sample's 63 daughters above the age of 18, over half (37) had migrated from St. John's, whilst most of these (32) had moved to the mainland. On the other hand, of the sample's 56 sons only 8 had migrated, 5 of these to the mainland. In the senior generation, of 65 married men in the sample, 24 had married women from the outports.

If by a 'rural ethic' we can understand this to mean here a body of ideas derived from the outports which supports virilocal marriage and one sex migration, then these figures can be adduced to argue that a rural ethic also applies in the capital; that it influences the migration of

daughters but not of sons from St. John's as this is also found in the outports, and that it applies even where the principal economic base of the city is wage labour and not collective returns from fishing. To these aspects of a rurally based cultural system found operating in the city we should also add that the "outport system" of one sex inheritance and the structural antagonism of brothers are also found in the capital.

3. Longshore Marriage and Family : The Developmental Cycle in St. John's (3)

It is against this briefly sketched cultural background and the occupational insecurities already described that this and the following section will now link the developmental cycle of the longshore family and the occupational career cycle⁽⁴⁾ of longshoremen, as is detailed in Appendix 2. Marriage, treated here as the start of the domestic developmental cycle, is an event normally considered in western kinship to have few occupational implications. It is here, however, seen to be a vital determinant of longshore status and accordingly is integral to an understanding of both cycles.

(a) Marriage (5)

In the absence of dowries and arranged marriages, both of which normally act to limit an individual's choice, and with many of the girls in St. John's living away from home, there is necessarily a high degree of randomness in the

choice of a spouse. This, however, can be over-emphasised. Though the theme of romantic love enters into the choice there is at the same time an acknowledgement of the importance of social category. One articulate father of four, all married, stated three "standards". "The first standard is the same religion - that's the most important. Second is the same economic level - marrying down is bad. The third is whether both families know each other - even if it's only slight." There is some support for at least the first of these principles: of the sample's 65 married men, a third (21) had chosen a mate from a different denomination whilst two-thirds had "married in"⁽⁶⁾.

It is an anthropological truism that marriage involves changes in an individual's relationships. By this event a new unit is created, the presence of which modifies existing cognatic relationships and involves both spouses having to relate to a new set of kin - their affines - to whom they now owe obligations and from whom they can expect certain rights.

In St. John's, these rights and obligations are likely to vary in intensity according to whether affines live in the city or whether they live "around the bay", that is, in an outport. When a man's wife is a "baywoman", his relationships with her kin are likely to be extremely tenuous - he may, for instance, never see his wife's parents from the day of his wedding to the day of their deaths.

For a woman, and especially a baywoman, the event

of her marriage brings profound changes in her relationships. She will be drawn into the female activities of her husband's family; most particularly those of his married sisters living in the city and of his mother. A wife, herself a baywoman by origin, described this tie as follows: "Mothers and daughters-in-law get to be very close. There's no such thing as mother-in-law jokes in Newfoundland. A mother-in-law is like your own mother." In one sense indeed this link between a baywoman and her city mother-in-law becomes closer than that between a daughter and her own rural mother. In Newfoundland the social activities of women, besides being sexually segregated, are rigidly stratified with the principal division depending on marital status. This means that a young unmarried woman is not expected to attend the same showers, or church groupings, as married women. Once married, however, she joins a new social grouping, one she now shares with the senior married generation. She is, therefore, entitled to attend the same social activities as her mother-in-law; indeed it is expected that she does so and further that they attend together. In doing this she is treated as a married daughter and thereby equated with her married sisters-in-law.

As a baywoman's links with her husband's family are seen to strengthen, so links with her family of orientation are seen to decline. If she receives funds from her father these cease when she marries and even visits home diminish. Before marriage a girl is expected to go home several times a year - particularly at Christmas and in the summer; after

marriage she is lucky to get away once a year and, as marriage proceeds and children arrive, she may not return 'home' for several years at a stretch.

Girls whose families live in the city⁽⁷⁾ have an unstructured choice of alliance based on personal choice. It was not possible to ascertain how this operated in practice. In the absence of systematic data it appears reasonable to accept the statement of one informant who, in discussing this point, said "Some go one way; some go the other; it depends on how they get on."⁽⁸⁾

For a man, particularly a longshoreman, the residence of his wife's family is of considerable importance - especially as this affects his chance of work. The manipulation of kinship ties in allocating men to work is more fully discussed later in this chapter. It should be noted here, however, that a man who marries a wife from the city expects more help from his affines, particularly his father-in-law, than he does from his own kin. As one longshoreman, talking of family influence, put it, "Fork relatives are more important than your own relatives", by which he meant, he later explained, "Your wife's relatives, especially her father, are more help in getting you work than your own". Asked why one's wife folk are called 'fork kin', longshoremen explain that the 'fork' refers to 'the fork in a pair of trousers', i.e. to the sexual linkage⁽⁹⁾.

One indication of the concomitant reduction in importance of a man's cognates - particularly his parents - is evident as soon as he marries. Normally sons are expected

to give some of their earnings to their mother and this obligation extends even to men working beyond the city or on the Mainland. Whereas "daughters are expected to be looked after", it was explained, "sons are expected to give money home". As soon as sons marry, however, this filial obligation ceases, to be replaced by token Christmas and birthday presents. At the same time a son loses rights of support from his cognates except in crises. "A man expects his son to stand on his own feet - especially when he marries", was how one longshoreman expressed it.

The event of marriage, therefore, means different things to the two sexes. For a man it brings social maturity and independence, with a marked loosening both of rights in and obligations to his family of orientation. This is most frequently marked by a move out of his parents' home into a home of his own. At the same time this is associated with a corresponding increase in the degree of alliance to his affines but only if they live in the city. Such an alliance is particularly manifest in a man's relationship to his father-in-law.

For a woman, marriage brings a degree of independence from her family of orientation to be replaced by a relative dependence on her husband and his kin. If she is a baywoman this is likely to be particularly marked. She is liable to be drawn closely into association with her husband's female relatives - to be treated in many ways as a daughter to her mother-in-law and as a sister to her husband's sisters. At the same time she will hope to become mistress of her own home so as to have a place in which to entertain her friends and neighbours.

(b) The Young Couple and Their Babies

Ideally it is considered couples should move into a separate residence on marriage or as soon as this can be arranged. The alternative is usually to move in initially with one or other set of parents, and this applied to nearly half of the married sample (32 out of 67)⁽¹⁰⁾. When this occurs two consumption units exist: as one longshoreman put it, "If it is at all possible two kitchens would be arranged because with young and old some friction is bound to arise". He continued "It's an old saying, 'two women can't stand on the one kitchen floor'". Even two kitchens, however, are a long way from the ideal of an independent dwelling which is so important as the basis of a married woman's social life. Because of this, longshoremen rarely spend more than two years in such a divided house. Often, though, they have to move to make way for another sibling and their spouse. One couple are reported to have acted as hosts in succession to three sons and a daughter together with their spouses and children. This was regarded as quite usual.

With pregnancy normally preceding marriage and with high birthrates that are found in Newfoundland⁽¹¹⁾, the early years of marriage are involved with rearing young children. Wives are, therefore, housebound and their chances of earning money are small⁽¹²⁾.

Unlike his wife, however, the young longshoreman at this time has considerable control over spending money in the household. During the early periods of marriage, he is typically at his earning peak since he is young and at his

fittest. He is most likely to be a regular man and to have a job in the ship's hold where fitness and strength can be expected to provide greater security in hiring and therefore higher earnings than can be expected by the average Union member (see Appendix 2). His control is further enhanced since, typically, a wife is uninformed of the total amount of earnings. She may well be aware of the arrival of particular boats and how much may be expected from them, since such information is often phoned through to gang members' homes and left as messages with wives. She is, however, unlikely to know about "hobble jobs" - short term engagements often lasting for only a few hours - where the element of chance in hiring is greater than normal. Thus, though wives might have a shrewd idea of the approximate earnings of their husbands, they are less likely to know of marginal extra earnings which often accrue on the waterfront.

In these circumstances, where young wives cannot easily earn money and are heavily dependent on their husbands, they have to petition for large household items such as furniture or bedding. In the purchase of small recurrent items such as food a wife has a degree of autonomy. Even here, however, her control over resources is limited since her proportionate control of household income is at this stage typically small, liable to wide fluctuations and largely dependent on her husband.

The typical wife can expect little household help from her husband or aid in the rearing of their children.

It is common for men to leave home before nine in the morning and to hang around the waterfront and the Union hall until evening, even when there is no chance of obtaining work. "It keeps you out of the way of the women", I was told⁽¹³⁾, and this lack of shared time between husband and wife is regarded as normal. Just as men spend most of their time in the company of workmates either on the dock, in the Union hall or in taverns, so wives spend most of their time looking after children, doing household tasks and gossiping with other women. A woman's leisure, even when her husband is at home, is rarely spent with him and in her spare time she will either go to another woman's house or entertain other women in her own. With the large families and cramped accommodation of most longshoremen there is literally little space for two sets of separate activities in a single dwelling.

This separation and lack of contact between spouses, corresponding to Bott's description of separate conjugal roles (Bott, 1971), is associated with tasks in the household being clearly defined according to sex. Men perform structural repairs to property, fix shelves, build cupboards and even make furniture, but very rarely, for instance, will they wash up, "take a broom" or cook⁽¹⁴⁾. These are "women's work" and few self-respecting men would do it - or at least confess to doing it.

(c) The Middle Years I : Parents and Young Children

The considerable authority enjoyed by the husband in the early years of marriage is relatively short-lived; in the second stage of the cycle it is seen to begin its slow

but certain decline.

Firstly and marginally, a wife gains control of some funds as soon as children arrive⁽¹⁵⁾. The Federal (Canadian) Government pay family allowances to mothers under the "Baby Bonus" scheme - the promise of participation in which proved a considerable encouragement to Newfoundland in its decision to confederate.

A second and much more significant contribution to this decline commences with the growing up of sons. At the age of eight or nine boys in St. John's begin to earn money. They are to be seen at work in a wide variety of spare time, after school and weekend occupations. It is common to find boys helping in the small grocery stores which abound in St. John's. These stay open during the evenings long after supermarkets have closed, and they similarly open at weekends. In summer, boys may be observed helping in gardens of middle-class families, in winter they can be seen clearing paths of snow, whilst the city's newspapers depend for their circulation almost entirely on their labour. In these and other ways the concealed contribution of working-class boys to the economic life of the city is considerable.

The significance of additions to family income from sons, as these affect the relative authority of husband and wife, can only be appreciated when it is realised that boys are expected to donate the largest share of such earnings to their mothers. Earnings of a boy of eight or nine, especially if regular earnings, can, therefore, represent considerable additions to a family budget. Even a marginal

£3 or £4 a week is of vital importance when a family's total income might rarely exceed £2,000 a year. And this is particularly so if the major part of this income is normally and seasonally erratic as it is in dockwork.

Daughters in St. John's are not as free to earn money as their brothers. Girls are, instead, expected to help their mother in the home, and they frequently take a considerable share in rearing junior siblings. It is not uncommon, when walking around the city's working-class neighbourhoods, to see little girls as young as six or seven shepherding four or even more small tots and exercising in the process considerable skills. Daughters, through contributing to family tasks and also because custom forbids it are thus unable to earn money in the same way as sons. Because of this they are more dependent on receipt of pocket money, which is derived from fathers, and their independence as a result is markedly less than that of their brothers.

It is evident that even at this early phase of the family cycle the stage is set for roles which are to come. At an early age boys contribute to family income whilst girls are seen to be taking out; sons as they grow older become increasingly independent and daughters in comparison progressively less so. At the same time sons, as minor but nonetheless often regular contributors to family income, are to a degree already to be seen replacing their fathers as family providers.

It is, however, in the relative authority enjoyed by husband and wife that forecasts of future changes are most discernible. At this phase of the cycle a wife's control

of resources is already beginning to increase at the same time as her husband's income is likely to be in decline. It can thus be understood that this phase marks the beginning of a transfer of authority to the wife at the expense of the husband. Decisions on some matters of family expenditure are now able to be taken independently by a wife in areas where before she was bound and exclusively subject to decisions of her husband.

(d) The Middle Years II : Parents and Their Growing Children

This third phase of the cycle sees a further reduction in a husband's command over resources in the same period that his wife comes to control an increasing proportion of total family income.

As children grow older, boys' earnings increase and a girl's role as mother's help becomes more embracing. Though full-time paid women's work is scarce in St. John's, it is possible at this stage for wives, now liberated from looking after small children, to earn some money by doing part-time work⁽¹⁶⁾.

Wives' earnings appear typically to be spent on children, whereas husbands' earnings are earmarked for major and regular housekeeping commitments such as rent and food bills. Wives are concerned to see that children have school uniforms and books which are not normally supplied by the schools, and she will use her control of income to finance

small treats and outings for her children. In this way expressive acts, as these depend on money, are at the disposal of the mother who can offer expressive demonstrations to both her daughters and her sons. Fathers, on the other hand, having less control over money and being perceived as instrumental providers, are expected only to make expressive gestures to daughters.

It is at this phase of the cycle that family conflicts are in greater evidence. With children reaching adolescence, boys who produce as well as spend family income contrast their position with daughters who, as they perceive them, spend without producing. At the same time, daughters see sons enjoying a greater independence which contrasts with their own increasing houseboundness. Whereas in the evening, it was explained to me, "boys take off about 7.30 - girls (will) take off at 8.30 or 9.0 - they have more things to do." And it is also at this phase of the cycle that sons are likely to earn more at their part-time (and later at their full-time) work, whereas daughters become increasingly dependent on their fathers.

One illuminating remark which well illustrates this opposition of brothers and sisters was made, en passant, by a stower who had married a second time after being widowed. During administration of the questionnaire (Appendix 3 Q.51) he said he had a daughter by his previous marriage but he hadn't seen her for some years. He then added in explanation - "You see, we're more like brother and sister than father and daughter". He meant by this that instead of the normal

affection found between a father and his daughter their relationship was characterised instead by distance and acrimony - it was more typical of the relationships expected and commonly found between brothers and sisters. This increasing division between brothers and sisters can be seen, not only as a microcosm of differences that divide men and women in the wider society, but also as an aid in permitting their greater association in groupings which are external to the family⁽¹⁷⁾. It is at this stage of their lives that adolescent children become linked with their peers in the mutually exclusive, sexually segregated groupings that will form the bases of similar groupings in their future social life. This sexual exclusion is very marked: when I asked one of my most intelligent informants, a longshoreman, the father of two sons and two daughters all over 16, what it was that boys did on their evenings with "the crowd", he knowledgably mentioned a variety of sports, both playing and spectator. When later I asked if he knew what girls did in their groups, he said he had no idea and appeared startled that the question should be put at all, finally answering with an embarrassed laugh, "You got me beat there, Boy".

A further estrangement within the family and one becoming most marked at adolescence is the opposition of brothers, whose relationship is typically ambivalent. Religious prescription, with its emphasis on 'brotherly love' as well as secular values, both require brothers to be helpful to each other and able to expect co-operation and aid when in need. At the same time, it is well recognised in everyday

life that brothers are antagonists. When my own brother was due to arrive in Newfoundland and I arranged that he stay with me in my flat, three separate informants all suggested that I was letting myself in for trouble. "There's wonderful⁽¹⁸⁾ trouble when you get brothers together", I was told. Because of this belief, as we shall see, brothers never work together on the dock.

It is at the stage of adolescence that the relationship of sons to their father is also likely to become stressful and indeed to remain so. By an irony of the life cycle, an adolescent son is beginning to feel his strength at the same time that a father is beginning to feel his age. In a community where physical vigour is vitally linked to earning ability and where both determine social respect, a father comes to see his sons in archetypal oedipal terms. One longshoreman paraphrased Freud in describing this situation when he said "As sons grow up they try to push you out".

In such a situation arguments occur over matters affecting the son's future, particularly those that impinge on a son's growing feeling of independence. A longshoreman with three sons thought that a common type of argument arose when, "Maybe for instance the young fella wants to go into a certain trade and the old man thinks different. Sure, you can get a hell of an argument over that." Where arguments do occur there is a likelihood that a mother and son will combine against the father. As the same longshoreman expressed it, "There's a natural alliance with those two".

This third stage of the cycle, then, continues to enhance authority of the wife and her growing sons at the expense of her husband. As her control over expenditure increases, his earnings decline: as the strength and earning capacity of a man's son waxes, his strength and capacity for work are seen to wane.

(e) The Final Years : Parents and Their Grown Up Children

In this last phase of the cycle original positions of authority in the family become quite reversed. Sons are now adult and, if unmarried and living at home, are likely to be considerable contributors to family income. This in its turn grants them and their mothers considerable say in family affairs. At the same time, and as Appendix 2 shows, longshore fathers' earnings decline sharply once they pass 50, and they are virtually unemployable past 60. It is then that they are referred to, like old ships or old houses, as "derelict" or "burnt out".

Mothers, on the other hand, having passed through the hard and expensive years of child rearing and being in control of a larger share of family income, find new value for themselves and new uses for their services: they are welcomed as workers in church affairs, are valuable in looking after grandchildren and can take jobs as cleaners or housekeepers. Their situation is in many ways similar to that of professionals where age is seen to provide extra experience and expertise that enhances rather than diminishes

their value: it is a position which lies in marked contrast to that of their husbands.

A transfer of paternal authority to sons is most evident in situations where the father is an unemployed derelict with an unmarried son in good and regular employment living at home. One of my informants in this situation, an ex-stower of 65, was arranging in the crowded Union Hall when it would be convenient for me to call at his home - a small house with one common room he occupied with his wife, spinster daughter and an unmarried son who had well paid and regular employment as a civil servant. "Come round any time, boy," he said loudly. I nodded a thank you and was walking away when he turned, hurried over and muttered: "Don't come round on Sunday or Monday nights, the son's in then and he watches TV."

In exceptional cases, even if grown up sons live at home, authority may still be maintained by the husband. This was so in three houses I regularly visited; in each the father was an exceptionally well established member of a regular gang. In two of these cases, unmarried adult sons were unemployed and the father was the sole wage earner. In the third, the son at home was only occasionally employed as a casual labourer. In all three, fathers were in autocratic control: there was no ambiguity about their entitlement to the family's main room, and as soon as I arrived, whether heralded or not, or if the father and I arrived together, there was a mass exodus and we were left alone. The contrast in houses of derelicts was most marked.

This control of a common recreational area provides a useful index of who actually holds authority in a family. As in the cases discussed above, and in the Jenkins household referred to in Chapter 3 where a temporary change in authority took place, such control is understood to be the symbol and evidence of real, as opposed to putative, family authority.

Whereas the father-son relationship is extremely stressful and is expressed as such by both sides, the relationship of an adult son to his mother is expressed in terms which appear startling in a cultural context where strong emotion is not usually overt. Men, especially after a drink or two, will talk of their mothers freely with idealised sentimentality as they recall hardships they had in bringing up large families and sacrifices they made to see them fed and clothed. The shops in St. John's have a constant turnover of metal and plaster wall plaques which extol these virtues in deeply sentimental verse. Longshoremen's houses often contain as many as half a dozen of these, proudly displayed as tributes to maternal virtue and as demonstrations of filial regard.

During an evening at my flat, a longshoreman of about 60 who had enjoyed rather too much hospitality became a little drunk and considerably maudlin. He continually insisted on singing the following song, the words of which are often to be seen reproduced on wall plaques. With tears coursing down his cheeks he sang:

M is for the million things she gave me,
O is for the only one I love.
T is for the tears she shed to save me,
H is for a heart as pure as gold,
E is for her eyes with laughter shining,
R means right - and right she'll always be.
Put these all together, they spell MOTHER
A word that means the world to me.

When asked whether a similar song existed extolling the virtues of fathers, he recited as verse, and with dramatic expressions of anger, the following:

F is for that funny man called father,
A because he's always after me.
T is for the things he throws at mother,
H is for his heart as black as ink,
E is for his eyes with anger shining,
R means right - but wrong he'll always be.
Put these all together, they spell FATHER
A word that puts the fear of death in me.

Middle-class residents of St. John's had all heard of the Mother verse though none were acquainted with that for Fathers. Both verses, however, were well known to longshoremen.

Though these verses are extreme statements they do bear a relationship to commonly accepted values. They can

perhaps best be understood as exaggerated reflections of the attitudes of sons to their parents. The relationship of fathers and sons is typically acrimonious and this was evident on the waterfront.

This cross sexual linkage between mothers and their adult sons, shown to have its origins in earlier phases of the family cycle, is paralleled by a similar link between fathers and adult daughters. It was emphasised on more than one occasion that "a daughter is expected to be looked after". This covers a wide range of concern, but has particular economic implications. As one longshoreman explained: "A daughter away from home will always be sent money". The same man continued, and others agreed, that on the other hand "Sons are always expected to give money home." It is likely, however that the earnings of a father, considered both absolutely and as a proportion of family income, is lower at this time than ever before. At the same time, earnings of sons are at a peak whilst daughters, if at home, now require a larger share of a family's income and, if away from home, are not seen even to contribute domestic services to the household.

It is evident, therefore, that the bases for divisions within the family which made their appearance when children were adolescent become reinforced in this final phase of the cycle.

In particular, disputes arise between brothers and sisters derived from the way economic resources are now allocated within the family. However, because these roles

operate within a system comprised of alliances, we also find that disputes - even though originating between brother and sister - often extend to parents. And for the same reason, it may also happen that a dispute which has its origin in the division between a brother and sister may nonetheless become manifest as a dispute between father and son.

Among the most common of these are reported to be arguments over the amount of money sent by fathers to daughters. Though a father is understood to have complete control over his own earned resources, "What he earns is his own", in actuality sons keep a watchful eye on their sisters. When one daughter was moving, on marriage, out of her parents' home into another part of St. John's, her father, a derelict of over 60, gave her several items of family furniture. It was learned that her brother resented this on the grounds that "she was getting more than her share". There was, reportedly, "a helluva row" as a result.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume from our discussion of divisions within the family that families have no cohesion. Cohesion was indeed ironically evident in attempts to obtain details of family disputes. Informants, for instance, would readily acknowledge the generalised "structural" basis of family arguments. In talking of sisters, for instance, it is readily accepted that "there's a natural competition there all the time". It was, however, difficult to obtain cases of disputes. Partly this was due to constraints of fieldwork discussed in Appendix I; it was also in large

part due to a reluctance to discuss family affairs outside the family. As one man explained, "Though families have friction on the inside there's always a united front on the outside". This united front meant that men who were normally extremely fluent on matters connected with work would give little information on family disputes - either their own or others.

As might perhaps be expected, disputes over inheritance occur but, of all disputes, these are "always kept within the family". Nevertheless, it appears that disputes are not uncommon between siblings over the inheritance of the family home⁽¹⁹⁾. Normally, houses in St. John's are transmitted to the remaining child living at home at the time the last surviving parent dies. This, however, favours children irrespective of sex and where houses pass to daughters is seen to conflict with the principle of male inheritance derived from the outports and buttressed by sons' contributions to family income.

One way in which a family's structural antagonisms are concealed behind a united front is in the formalising of their behaviour. Where sons and fathers are antagonists this is not made evident in public. No matter where real authority lies in a family it is important that, to outsiders, a son should demonstrate a subservient respect and the fiction of a paternal authority be maintained⁽²⁰⁾. In the household previously discussed, where a derelict of 65 had a civil servant son living in the home, this was very evident. One could not but be conscious of the artificiality of their

behaviour as the son with elaborate politeness deferred to his father. In discussing this behaviour, another informant said "They fight like hell when only the family's there but you're an outsider. No family likes to wash its dirty washing when outsiders are present. No matter how rotten a family was they'd be ashamed of that." He admitted, however, that such disputes did on occasion become public.

In the absence of attendance at crises and family rituals (see Appendix I) it was not possible to observe as I had planned either assemblies or occasions for collective cooperation of kinsmen or, therefore, to determine how people related to their kin in different degrees of intimacy and knowledge (Firth, 1956).

4. Family Relationships and Their Influence on the Dock

The world of work on the waterfront appears to be entirely a man's world. Women are never seen on the dock and women rarely appear in the Union Hall except very occasionally to pay fees for a sick member. Indeed, one of the difficulties for an anthropologist working in a situation like the waterfront is a constant tendency to minimise the role of women. Yet the significance of women, by their articulation within the kinship structure and as this affects a man's chance of obtaining work, is considerable. When, during the latter part of fieldwork, men more readily discussed the mechanisms of hiring, it was frequently acknowledged that women, as we shall see, have an important part to play in the process of allocation. Their

influence too is of especial significance when understood against the backgrounds of chronic unemployment and casual labour outlined in Chapter 1. In other ways also women are seen to influence work relationships and to affect men's decisions in areas as diverse as discipline and after work drinking.

(a) The Father/Son Relationship

Though women are important in influencing the subsequent allocation of men to jobs, the most important kinship tie initially affecting new entrants to the waterfront is the father/son relationship. Restrictions on entry to closed shop Union membership enhance the importance of this connection since preference in periodically admitting a limited number of members has always been given to sons of existing members⁽²¹⁾. This can perhaps better be appreciated when it is realised that of 59 foremen, regular and outside men in the sample, no less than 37 are sons of Union members.

However bad relations may be between a father and his son at the time of his son's induction⁽²²⁾, a father is nonetheless expected to exploit his network of contacts⁽²³⁾ for his son's benefit. This means that a father who is a regular man has an obligation to try to obtain for his son a place in a regular gang. Once this has been arranged a father's obligation is regarded as complete. It was explained that in the first instance "a man will introduce - make an opening for his son - but then he's on his own". The same informant continued, "He's on his own especially when he marries. A man

expects his son to stand on his own feet".

This statement encapsulates the ambiguity apparent in work roles of father and son. Though a father expects his son to be independent, he is nonetheless dependent, certainly when he is new to the waterfront; though "on his own", there are degrees of lonesomeness. An unmarried son, even after introductions and openings have been effected, appears less "on his own" than a married son.

It is understood on the waterfront that when a young man first joins the labour force his father should aim to have him accepted, if at all possible, not in his own gang but in another gang on the same wharf. This, however, is not always possible and it appeared that most men's first job was within the same gang as their father. When, however, a father is successful in placing his son in an adjacent gang, he is seen to have avoided a possible carry over of frictions from home to work. This consideration is important to longshoremen since the expected behaviour of father and son is incompatible with the behaviour expected among work mates. Work gangs - and especially their sub-sections - are ideally expected to comprise a group of equal friends; the relationship of co-workers requires, therefore a show of easygoing familiarity and joking, horseplay, and jocular swearing are not uncommon on the dock. When men were questioned about the nature of relationships within their gangs they would invariably reply along the lines, "everyone is buddies". When it was pointed out that this is perhaps an ideal evaluation that doesn't really reflect reality, and mention made of known incompatibil-

ities, acknowledgement was usually granted that all relationships within a gang are not always so harmonious. Longshoremen are quick to emphasise, however, that antagonists who do work in the same gang are very rarely to be found in the same section of that gang. No informant could remember a case of father and son working together within the same section of a gang.

Behaviour which is considered appropriate among workmates is, therefore, very different from that expected between fathers and their sons. A son in public, unlike a workmate, is as we have seen expected to demonstrate subservient respect to his father. This demonstration is most likely to be found where an unmarried son still lives under his father's roof. The basis of this respect, however, diminishes when a son's earnings rival the father's as main family provider, and it particularly diminishes after sons are married. In these situations, especially if a son is "on his own", i.e. has moved into a house of his own, the hostility endemic to their relationship is considered likely to erupt. It is thought that where father and son are working together, particularly if the son is married, that such eruption can easily engulf other members of the gang; structural antagonists, therefore, need to be separated so that conflict within the gang can be minimised. This is essential if gangs are to be able effectively to operate strategies of opposition against the power of their foremen.

This separation of father and son's work roles serves other functions. As we saw, fathers and sons are structurally

opposed but mothers and sons act in alliance. This alliance is one of opposition to the father and is cemented on the unmarried son's side by the passing of some of his earnings to his mother. Without this practice of work separation, therefore, a son who worked in the same gang as his father would be well informed of his exact earnings - could make invidious comparisons about each of their contributions to the family housekeeping and could, if so disposed, provide a weapon for his mother and against his father by "leaking" such information to her.

Work separation serves a further function in insulating the fields of leisure and family. An important leisure activity of longshoremen is drinking after work in taverns with members of their gang - particularly with members of their sub-gang. In these sessions men may drink for several hours at a time, the bonhomie found at work becomes even more enhanced, conversation tends to become ribald and boasting of such things as sexual prowess is not uncommon. Such behaviour, however, though prescribed for drinking companions, is thought of as quite inappropriate between fathers and sons⁽²⁴⁾.

It can be seen then that the use by a son of his father's support network is potentially disruptive. The type of avoidance relationship which I have termed "work avoidance", however, allows this scarce social resource to be fully utilised and it does this as we have seen by reducing possible conflict in two ways.

Firstly, it insulates the work, leisure and family roles of a man's role set so that expected behaviour congruent

to one situation is not found incompatibly in another; and secondly, it localises structural antagonism to its originating system of social relations by restricting the flow of communication between these systems.

(b) Brothers On The Dock

Several of the same considerations are seen to apply in governing the work relationship of brothers, particularly the need to ensure that gangs are, as far as possible, able to maintain their collective identities in united opposition to management. The same mechanisms of avoidance were also found supporting the view that "there's wonderful trouble when you get brothers together". Accordingly, there were no known cases of brothers ever having worked together in the same section of a gang. It was regarded as not uncommon, however, for brothers, like fathers and sons, to be found working in different sections of the same gang, particularly at the start of their careers on the dock, when a family's personal network is largely derived from one source - the father. There were no cases of men in the sample saying that they ever spent time socially with their brothers.

At the same time as limiting disputes between members of a nuclear family, therefore, the practice of work separation, by distributing family members throughout a series of gangs also serves to ensure a more regular supply of family income in an employment situation marked by chronic uncertainty.

(c) Foremen and Their Kinsmen

Just as certain family roles are structured in a form which emphasises antagonism between kinsmen; so too are certain work roles also structured in ways which make inevitable antagonism between workers. One of the most well understood of these dilemmas lies in the conflicting demands on the role of foreman⁽²⁵⁾. In the St. John's dock this role is particularly stressful, with a foreman being responsible to his superiors for the selection, output and discipline of his men at the same time that he is vitally dependent upon them for output on which his own job security is dependent. In certain situations work derived antagonisms are found to be superimposed on antagonisms already derived from the family; particularly is this the case where a foreman hires his own relatives - especially his sons - as members of his gang.

Such cases are not uncommon, though more usually in the past than during the period of fieldwork. In one case Walsh, a foreman at one of the two large premises, was reported as having his son Bill, and brother's son Ewart, together with his wife's sister's two sons, all working in his gang at the same time. "He used to get after those four all the time", I was told. "There was quite a bit of antagonism there, especially with Bill: he used him as a scapegoat all the time".

There was only one case I observed of a son exploiting similar power over his father. 'Titch' Robinson, also a foreman, regularly hired his father as a skidsman in his gang, even though the father was old, being over 70, and to an extent

infirm. On one occasion the father returned late from the midday break with two men from the same gang, all being slightly drunk. Robinson Jnr. ranted at the three but dismissed only one from that particular boat - his father. The other men in the gang accepted this act as reasonable and were certainly not prepared to object, as they might well have done had all three been sacked. "It is terrible, the way he goes on", I was told, "But then, there's never any love lost between father and son".

This use by a foreman of his relatives, and particularly his sons, as scapegoats, was considered normal and expected. "You see, he can bawl and shout at them and there is nothing much they can do about it. It is also a warning to the rest of the gang, but it does not hurt them much." By scapegoating his relatives, therefore, a foreman can be seen to reconcile the conflicting aspects inherent in his role. On the one hand, he is observed by management to be chasing his men, tightening on discipline and encouraging high output; on the other, he is enabled to do this without alienating the rest of his gang on whom, as he well knows and as we shall subsequently see, so much of his output and security is really dependent.

(d) Family, Kinship and Job Allocation

It is not surprising, then, that because of their antagonism a son will aim to move out of his father's gang as soon as this is possible - such an incentive being particularly likely to influence the sons of foremen when employed by their

fathers. But regular jobs in the gangs are scarce; there are always innumerable outside men in this casual labour market who also wish to become regular gang members. How can this change be effected? There are two ways: the first depends on a son building up and adequately maintaining his own personal support network as distinct from that of his father's; this of course will take some time; the second, however, can be effected more quickly - it involves linking with the network of some other ego and this latter course can most readily be achieved by the choice of mate in a man's marriage.

Marriage, as this event is seen to articulate with longshore work, serves to extend the alliance between a father and his daughter to encompass the daughter's husband. This means, in its practice on the dock, that a father can place his own support network at the service of his daughter and, if a regular man, can by manipulation aim to move her husband into his own regular gang. We thus find alongside the structured antagonism of father and son as this is manifest on the dock, that marriage creates the possibility of a structured alliance between a father-in-law and his son-in-law. The Union Delegate explained how these push and pull factors operated in practice. "A father with a son in his gang will not be happy about it and neither will the son - so when he gets married he'll move out to escape this. If he can, he'll likely move into his father-in-law's gang. His father-in-law will not be quite as strict in this case as a father. But he'll move out of his father-in-law's gang if he possibly can." This movement into or between gangs is, of course, easily

CHART 1KINSHIP AND ITS INFLUENCE
IN WORK ALLOCATION

	<u>Bachelors</u>		<u>Married Men</u>			<u>Totals</u>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Kinship Category (a)	E-	E+	E-W-	E+W-	E-W+	E+W+	
Job Category							
A. Outside Men	1	3	3	5	1	1	14
B. Regular Men (b)	5	4	3	14	9	10	45
TOTALS	6	7	6	19	10	11	59

NOTES: (a) E+ or E- signifies ego's father being a longshoreman or not

W+ or W- signifies ego's wife's father being a longshoreman or not

(b) Col. B includes 6 Foremen

effected on marriage if either the son or the daughter's father is a foreman and, therefore, is in some control of hiring. In a typical case Cooper married foreman Holley's daughter. Prior to this he had been an outside man. After marriage he moved straight into Holley's gang, though this move did not occur until after the ceremony⁽²⁶⁾. Two years later he again moved, this time from Holley's gang to another gang on the same wharf. In this time he had built up his own network. This same foreman, Holley, also had his three sons working in different sections of his gang. Two of them married and after each wedding Holley arranged for the newly married son to be hired by a co-foreman.

This importance of marriage in the allocation of men to work is understood by longshoremen to be one of the most effective ways of ensuring membership in a regular gang: it explains why longshoremen strongly believe, as previously stated, that "Fork relatives are more important than your own relatives". For this reason, it was explained to me, one of the time honoured ways of ensuring work is to "marry the boss's daughter". This, I was told, is an old expression on the waterfront. "If you don't work with him, he will get you work somewhere." It is agreed that to marry the boss's daughter is an even more assured way of obtaining work than to be the son of the boss.

This significance of kinship in job allocation is supported by analysis of the sample. Of 59 men working in the gangs, 45 were in preferred jobs as regular men (including foremen) and 14 were in non-preferred jobs as outside men. All job holders were categorised according to four criteria; whether

married or a bachelor, whether own father was (or had been) a longshoreman, whether wife's father was (or had been) a longshoreman and whether the respondent was a regular or an outside man. 12 categories were, therefore, created as illustrated in Chart 1.

Though the figures are not claimed as statistically definitive - for reasons discussed in Appendix 3 - they are nonetheless supportive. Of the 11 men in Column 6 who were in 'double benefit', being both themselves sons of longshoremen and being married to daughters of longshoremen, no less than 10 were members of regular gangs. The importance of affinity alone is suggested by Column 5; of 10 men who "married in" to the waterfront, 9 were members of regular gangs. Column 4 suggests how cognatic links by themselves are not as potent in influencing men to work as are affinal links, with 5 out of 19 in this category being outside men. The numbers in Columns 1 to 3 inclusive are considered too small to support the thesis, though Columns 2 and 3 are in line with expectations.

(e) Bachelors

If the stated and believed-in importance of fork relatives is accepted it means that bachelors, by definition lacking these links, are at a distinct disadvantage in their chance of selection as regular men. No systematic figures were collected on the proportionate allocation of bachelors between preferred and non-preferred categories, but three sources support the belief that bachelors are discriminated

against not only in hiring but as a definite social category and therefore also in other ways. The first lies in direct observation of how bachelors were treated; the second is in Union justification for discrimination in hiring and in other matters; and the third lies in the statements of bachelors themselves.

Firstly, it should be noted that the social situation of bachelors elsewhere in Newfoundland has been noted by several observers (Paris, 1966; Szwed, 1967; Firestone, 1968), all of whom found them the subject of jokes and ribaldry. This treatment was associated in outports with the unenviable situation of men without wives where wifely work is seen in many ways as vital to complement the fishing tasks of men. Among longshoremen in St. John's, bachelors also are seen as second-rate adults who, by virtue of their non-married state may be jibed at and given less access to work than other men. Normally such a role is accepted, though not without resentment as the following cases reveal:

(i) While I was walking down one of St. John's' steep hills leading to the waterfront with Joe McKinnon, a bachelor of about 40, who was an outside man, we saw coming towards us a married, regular longshoreman of about 30. As he came nearer he said "Hello Joe. I had a funny dream about you last night. I dreamt you got married." Joe's answer was delivered without either party pausing in his steps. "Well, have another dream tonight. Dream you drop fucking dead!"

(ii) On another occasion when I was present in the Union Hall, which was fairly empty, the quiet of the few card

players was rudely disturbed by sudden shouting. I came out of the Union office to see a furious outside man, Mick Wharton, a small and rather weedy bachelor of 45, being held back by four other members. He was uttering strong threats about what he intended to do to a regular, married man of 40, named Moore, one of the toughest men in the Union who stood about a foot taller than Wharton. On instruction of the Union janitor Wharton was ejected from the hall. The argument had arisen because Wharton alleged that Moore had suggested in a joke that he was homosexual. Moore would often joke with bachelors about their lack of sexual opportunities. This much was allowed and generally accepted but, by the jibe of homosexuality, he had gone too far. When the struggling Wharton was safely outside the Union Hall door, the janitor then mildly criticised Moore for provoking trouble.

These cases illustrate how bachelors are regarded as good sport. Both cases show how jibes are disguised with jocularity but are appreciated as aggression. When, however, aggression exceeds accepted limits violence can occur. It is interesting to note that threats of violence among long-shoremen are frequently made but rarely carried out. They are usually only made when the man threatening is fairly sure that there are enough people, available and interested enough, to hold the parties apart. In this way a protest is made, honour is satisfied and the social and physical disruption inevitable to a fight is avoided.

Normally, however, such jibes are not so overtly aggressive nor the responses so violent. When, for instance,

I was administering the questionnaire to a bachelor and I called to take him from the group in which he was sitting, one of the men called out "Now don't be going to tell Mr Mars you're a married man now." My informant joined in the laughter at this, but in discussing the role of bachelors in a subsequent interview referred to this occasion and called the joker "a cocksucker", a common term of abuse.

It is not surprising that bachelors should feel themselves discriminated against in hiring or that, in belonging to a category of second-rate members, should feel unable to participate fully in Union affairs. One bachelor, normally vociferous to me about Union policy, was nevertheless always silent at Union meetings. When asked why this was so, he said that it would just invite jibes. Men would say "What do you need money for? You're a bachelor!" He used to speak out at one time but this had always been the response so now he never bothered.

Union Executives have accepted this situation with equanimity - perhaps not surprisingly since bachelors rarely stand for Union office and never become members of the Executive. When I asked several members of the Executive collected together in the Union office why they had never argued for a rotatory hiring scheme, and its workings were then being discussed, the President stated in surprise - "But wouldn't that give the same work to the single man as to the married man?" When told this was so he replied that on these grounds alone he would be opposed to such a scheme.

(f) Derelicts

This response to bachelors as second rate is seen as similar to that afforded derelict longshoremen - though here a degree of ambivalence exists. Religious and societal prescription both demand that the old be respected; at a formal level we find that the Union makes special provision at Christmas and supplies each of the "old timers" with a fowl and some groceries. At the level of personal relationships, however, contact tends to be minimal and, when it occurs, is often acrimonious. This is so for several reasons. Firstly, as described in Chapter 7, much social contact between longshoremen is functionally specific and serves to develop and maintain links designed to enhance security in the hiring situation. Retired longshoremen, by definition, having little or no influence in this sphere have, therefore, little to offer: indeed, it can be said that for them the principal basis of normal social contact no longer exists.

Secondly, contact is minimal since costs of membership in the main longshore social groupings often involve considerable expense: specifically, drinks need to be bought and this costs money. Retired longshoremen are less able to bear this expense than are other members of the Union, and though unbalanced reciprocities can exist in the short term, they cannot persist for long. Not only, therefore, are derelicts unable to offer influential services in the hiring situation, but their actual and potential means of balancing out this lack through drink buying is also seen as minimal.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important, minimal contact occurs because derelict longshoremen, like bachelors, are regarded as good sport. Interaction between the old and the younger, when it occurs, is likely to take the form of a joking relationship that is essentially asymmetrical and, to an outsider, appears rather cruel⁽²⁷⁾. Old men will be joked with about their lack of strength and often about their lack of sexual vigour. On one occasion in the Union Hall, a group of four longshoremen all aged about 50, were joking in this way with a derelict of about 75. "You can tell us", said one, "you're past it now, aren't you?" "No - I'm not past it" he answered, and he emphasised this decisively. "Well", replied another with a wink at his fellows, "I bet it takes you a long time". The older man's answer was immediate. "Ah, well," he replied, "but you see - I don't begrudge the time!"

This response was considered highly atypical by most informants since most old men, lacking the ready wit shown above, tend to react to such joking with ill humour or, more simply, avoidance. When one old man refused to talk to me during the early period of fieldwork - a common enough reaction at that time - a younger man remarked. "Ah - don't you know, all old men are bad-tempered." When old men are discussed, this appellation 'bad-tempered' is frequently heard; a perhaps not unsurprising reaction to their socially determined role as younger men's laughing stock and the lack, as elsewhere in the island, of any criteria for age induced authority.

As a result of these reactions to them, derelict longshoremen, though having more time on their hands than younger men, tend to avoid using the Union Hall⁽²⁸⁾. Instead they meet together on a sheltered section of pavement, and are to be seen, often in a group, leaning on a hand rail at a junction of the main street and a side turning close to the harbour. From this point they are able to see boats entering and leaving the dock, and can nod to and observe gang crews as they pass to and from the Union Hall. In this way they are still able to keep in touch with the gossip, know who is working with whom, and hope for the fulfilment of the outside and derelict man's dream - a harbour full of ships with work for all.

5. Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to link the occupational career of the longshoreman to the developmental cycle of his family group, and to set both within the wider context of what is known of Newfoundland kinship. It has aimed to show how a decline in power and prestige on the dock is reflected in a similar decline at home. At the same time, as these work and domestic cycles both progress, so too the system of cross sexual alliances derived from the outports and found within the nuclear family in St. John's becomes more pronounced. These opposed alliances, extending their effects on marriage beyond the nuclear family of origin, were then examined as they

were seen to influence aspects of relationships at work; in particular as they affected the allocation of men both into and out of work gangs; as they contributed to avoidance relationships on the dock and in the tavern; and as they influenced the distribution of discipline by foremen in scapegoating their relatives.

Footnotes to Chapter 2

- (1) For empirical studies of Fishermen see Tunstall, 1962; of Miners, Denis Henriques and Slaughter, 1956; of Lorrydrivers, Hollowell, 1968. Useful references on theoretical aspects of this association are in Dyer in Mosow and Form, 1962; and Taylor, 1968, Ch. XIX.
- (2) "It is sufficiently evident that one way of obviating open conflict between two persons is for them to avoid one another or treat each other with very marked respect." (Radcliffe Browne, 1952, p. 107.)
- (3) In St. John's the household, on the bases of commensality and child rearing, comprises the nuclear family of man, wife and children and is therefore also the domestic group as defined by Fortes in Goody (Ed.) 1958. Following Fortes also, the word "phase" has been used instead of "stage" to distinguish developmental sequences in the cycle which frequently overlap. Though sympathetic to Stacey's (1969) attempt at encouraging comparability of data, it was not found feasible to adopt her fourfold division of the cycle, or Fortes' threefold one. The problem in analysing the Newfoundland data arises from the importance of distinguishing within the phase of expansion (Fortes) and procreation (Stacey) to bring out the essential differences in authority of wife and husband which occur in what I have termed The Middle Years I and The Middle Years II.
- (4) Career as used here follows the definition of Taylor (1968, p. 266), "Career implies norms and structuring, identifiable and discrete stages, through which practitioners pass as they experience a life's work in a given occupation."

- (5) The median age at which longshoreman in the sample married was 24. Of 46 married men two-thirds (31) were married by this age. The median age at which wives married was earlier; a third of 45 wives (16) (details were unobtained for one wife), were married by the time they were 20, whilst the vast majority (40) were married by the time they were 30. The overall median age of wives at marriage was 21.
- (6) Conversion in the case of intermarriage is not common and is almost unknown for men (see Appendix 4). By an oversight, no record was made of the marriages of respondents' children.
- (7) The city was divided into five areas to see if residential proximity affected the choice of spouse, but no such correlation was found.
- (8) As Firth points out, a distinctive aspect of Western urban kinship is that it provides a field of personal choice and allows selectivity (Firth, 1956).
- (9) There seems to be some variation in the meaning of the term "fork relatives". In Cat Harbour, Paris describes how it is loosely applied not as here, to affines, but as "a link of first degree to those with whom one has a tie of some sort which is unnatural, extraordinary or in some way apart from the normal kinship links established in the usual course of events these include 1) step kin, including step-parents, step-siblings and step-children; 2) half siblings of either common parent; 3) adopted children, parents or siblings; and 4) illegitimacies" The St. John's usage appears more in accord with the Cat Harbour form "Cunny kin", meaning ego focussed affines. (Paris, 1965, p. 93.)
- (10) Of these 32, 14 stayed with the wife's parents and 17 with the husband's, whilst one stayed with both consecutively - the husband's first, "then after an argument, with the wife's". This about equal selection appears to suggest an equal preference but this was not borne out by conversations with men about their fathers, much of which reflected tension in the relationship. Further examination of the 17 couples who initially stayed with parents of the husband reveal that 7 of these were marriages to non-St. John's women; there was, therefore, no wife's family in the city.
- (11) See Chapter 1. The 61 fertile couples in the sample have a total of 310 children - an average of 5 per family and some of these were still producing - see Appendix 2 for ages of the labour force. This average is constant amongst both Catholics and Protestants

as well as amongst all occupational categories in the Union. There are few (4) cases of infertility in marriage which, among my informants, was always attributed to wives.

- (12) Of the 12 wives in the sample who worked, not one had a child under 12 years of age. When men were asked whether their wives worked or not they frequently replied, "No - the children are too young yet", or "She's got babies to look after". (See Appendix 2.)
- (13) The situation in St. John's appears to be very different from that found among the families of Manchester dock workers, where researchers found the casual labour market had encouraged "the dock worker (to be) in and out of the house at all hours of the day". As a result they found that in Manchester this "close association between home and work has meant that the dock worker has developed a great interest and high regard for family life". (Liverpool University, 1954, p. 50.)
- (14) Question 37, Sections a, b and c were graded from 1 (most days) to 5 (rarely). The scores achieved out of a maximum of 15 were averaged according to occupational category as follows:
- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|
| 8 Outside men. | Average score | 6.5 |
| 33 Regular men. | " " | 3.2 |
| 14 Checkers. | " " | 5.66 |
| 6 Foremen. | " " | 3.66 |
- Scores appeared to bear no relationship to phase of the domestic cycle or presence in the home of adult daughters.
- (15) In 1963 these were £6 a month for children up to 10 and £8 from 10 to 15.
- (16) Among work done by longshore wives was work as domestic servants, operatives in the local fish processing plant and institutional cleaning in such places as government buildings, the university and the city's hospitals.
- (17) There is a parallel here with the work of Gluckman. In a famous passage discussing the function of taboos in African societies he writes "... taboos are also important because they introduce divisions - estrangements - into the family and prevent it absorbing the whole-hearted emotional allegiance of its members The estrangements in the family are associated with the extension of ties to wider kinship groupings. These groupings support the family, but they are also inimical to the family, and they are important in building the cohesion of the larger society."

As we shall see, in St. John's these extra familial groupings are not kin based but religious and occupational; represented by religious groupings for women and for longshoremen in their work gangs. Gluckman, of course, does not exclude other means besides taboos of structuring estrangements into the family. (Gluckman, M, 1955, p. 57.)

- (18) Newfoundlanders use the word "wonderful" in the same way that the English use "awful".
- (19) 62.3% of houses in the city's central area - where almost all St. John's longshoremen live - are owner occupied. (To aid longshoremen in owning their own houses the Union up to 1964 had issued over 60 mortgages.) J.D. House. Two Lower Class Areas in St. John's. Memorial University of Newfoundland. I.S.E.R., 1964.
- (20) This decline of the husband's authority in the family which is associated with a reduction both in physical prowess and in earnings is possibly more widespread among casual labourers than has been realised. The researchers in the Manchester docks claim that casual labour there and the passage of occupation from father to son was associated with a "patriarchal family structure" where a father is "the unquestioned head of the household". (Liverpool University, 1954, p. 49.) Though both these features were found in St. John's the father's authority nonetheless declined. If I had accepted statements about authority, however, rather than checked on observations, then I would have reached a similar conclusion.
- (21) The application form for Union membership asks for details of relatives in the Union (preference is given to sons of members, and for some years before the Union's books were effectively closed in 1956 all admissions were so restricted); age (applicants must normally be over 18 but exceptions have been made, e.g. sons of deceased members have been allowed to join at 16); whether the applicant has a trade (tradesmen are barred); and length of residence in St. John's (normally there is a 15 year restriction).
- (22) The median age at which men joined the Union was 20, and there is no statistical indication that marriages precipitate Union membership. Neither are distinctions revealed in this respect between longshoremen who are the sons of longshoremen and those who are not. The marriage of non-longshore sons to longshore daughters similarly shows no correlation with the age of their entry to Union membership, which in all cases occurs some four years later than the median marriage age.

- (23) The term network is used here and subsequently as defined by Bott, *op. cit.* p. 320, "all or some of the social units (individuals and groups) with whom a particular individual or group is in contact. Mitchell (1969) calls this a 'personal' or 'ego-centric' network".
- (24) For a similar situation amongst Coal Miners see Denis, Henriques & Slaughter, 1956, pp. 218-9.
- (25) See, for instance, W.F. Whyte and B.B. Gardner, 1945.
- (26) Though I did not observe actual cases, nor received corroboration, I was told that in some of the city's smaller churches the courtship phase (where a man is sleeping with a girl he intends to marry) is socially recognised and marked by a transfer of seating arrangements in the church on Sundays. Normally a young man sits in church with his family of orientation. When courting he will physically move to sit with his girl's family: the change of seating symbolising his coming separation from his own family and the growing tie to his proposed affines.
- (27) See Faris 1966, p. 134, for a similar situation in Cat Harbour, Newfoundland.
- (28) It is interesting to note Cumming and Schneider's (1961) suggestion that the generational solidarity of the larger society with its emphasis on fine age gradings (as found among St. John's longshoremen) is essentially associated with sibling solidarity. This is certainly not the situation in St. John's - nor was it found elsewhere in Newfoundland where extreme rivalry among siblings is found simultaneously with a strong consciousness of age gradings. A similar point is made by Faris (1966, p. 99).

CHAPTER 3

RELIGION

1. Introduction : Religion In the City and the Province
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 - a) The Married Women's Units
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CHAPTER 3

RELIGION

1. Introduction : Religion in the City and the Province

Religious influences permeate all levels of social activity in Newfoundland and regular church attendance is the norm (see Appendix 4). As a result of this basic religious sentiment the churches thus come to control and direct many institutions that elsewhere are commonly thought of as essentially secular. Two of St. John's three major hospitals, for instance, are operated by the churches, as are most of the smaller medical units and so too are 45 of the city's 46 schools⁽¹⁾.

It should be noted, as an indication of the importance of religious influence, that the churches' control of schooling is now enshrined in the Provincial Constitution⁽²⁾. One of the conditions of Confederation with Mainland Canada in 1949 was the provision of taxable funds in perpetuity to support church schools.

It is in welfare activities, however, that the churches are seen to be particularly active. Church welfare agencies sometimes operate as monopolies - as in the case with the city's orphanages - or they supplement public welfare services that already cater to such groups as the sick, the jobless and the sufferers of sudden misfortunes.

It would be surprising if the churches, integrally involved in the economic and social life of the Province and the city, and backed as they are by a popular moral commitment, should be unrepresented in the political life of the island. This involvement of the churches with politics, though evident enough, is, however, found to be an indirect one and no church as such, or even the predominant membership of a church, is found having any particular alignment to a particular political party. What is found, however, is that political as well as other offices are allocated on religious grounds⁽³⁾. Whitaker quotes a member of the Provincial House of Assembly in 1949 as saying: "When a party is being formed you will hear them say 'One is just as bad as the other'. 'You cannot have this fellow leader of the party; he is a Roman Catholic, Protestants will not vote for him.' This is a well known fact." Thus, though the major political parties represent all denominations, the main criteria in their selection of a candidate is that his religion should match that of his proposed constituents.

This selection of men to office on grounds of religion also extends to non elected positions. As Whitaker has further observed: "There is also a commonly practised principle by which the three larger denominations divide the major public offices: what I shall call the TROIKA system. This puts a premium on religious adherence, and more particularly upon conformity. One's chances of becoming a judge of the Supreme Court if one were, for instance, a Seventh

Day Adventist, or a Senator if one subscribes to the doctrines of Mary Baker Eddy or the Jehovahs Witnesses, are entirely nugatory. A great number of offices, both major and minor, are allocated on religious grounds rather than on grounds of efficiency or technical suitability."⁽⁴⁾ This principle even appears to operate within the University where Deanships would seem to be allocated on the same basis. As one Professor jokingly remarked, "the only way I can be promoted is to convert to Salvationism - the next sized group without its Dean".

It is possible, therefore, to deduce three ways by which, as we shall see, religious influences are manifest and by which among other influences they particularly affect the allocation of resources, both material and social. The first of these deals with implications of the churches' control over welfare; the second with the role of churches' political interests; and the third the use of key personnel in secular offices to further the aims and interests of their churches and of their co-religionists. We shall now examine how these influences affect relationships in the two worlds of men and of women - that is, of how they operate in the spheres of work and the home.

2. Religion and Home : The Role of Women in Church Activities

It is accepted in St. John's, both among the clergy, with several of whom I discussed women congregants, and with the longshore laity, that women, as one Minister expressed it

"are the backbone of church activities". (5)

These activities are extensive, both in the time and resources that women spend on them and in the range of their involvements. Some cater for purely social purposes; others have social and religious functions; whilst many involve fund raising, sometimes for specific ends, sometimes generally "for the church". In many cases these functions cannot be separated. Most churches, for instance, organise bingo groups and card evenings which may be preceded by hymns and a prayer, with the finance going to support hospitals and orphanages. In addition, specific committees exist within most churches to cater to selected groups of unfortunates such as the sick, the blind, the handicapped and the deprived of different sorts and ages. Most of these activities, except the job getting Committees, are largely organised and operated by women. Since the schools are denominational, their parent-teacher associations can also be considered as church activities; they too are seen to organise social and fund raising activities that parallel sectarian ones and these also are largely run by women.

It was not possible to obtain specific figures on the participation of longshore wives in these various activities. An examination, however, was made of some of the activities of one branch of the United Church. This was selected because the United Church has the allegiance of half of the city's Protestants; the particular branch was situated in a parish close to the docks; it contained a high number of longshore congregants and, most pertinently,

at the time of my enquiry I was boarding in a longshoreman's house whose family were congregants.

It is understood that other churches in the city perform similar social functions as the United Church and that they adopt similar mechanisms - though some of these are not as formalised. The Catholic Churches, for instance, organise activities that duplicate most of those carried out by the United Church but lack the formally organised women's units shortly to be described, and they lack too its formal job-getting committees.

This particular branch of the United Church has a total congregation of just over 400 families. The Minister believes, as our questionnaire suggested for longshoremen of all denominations, that at least one representative parent comes from each home every Sunday⁽⁶⁾. He said that he receives "close to 400 contributions each week". "Contributions" are envelopes containing a family's offering of money which is delivered by hand each Sunday.

a) The Married Women's Units

Though the church contains separate men and women's organisations, the most flourishing of these are the Married Women's Units. There are 12 such units which each comprise 20 - 25 women and, therefore, include in their membership some two-thirds of the total eligible field. A parallel set of units cater for unmarried women though their memberships are apparently less active.

The membership of each unit is neighbourhood based and comprises a closely knit group of friends and kin who meet individually and informally as well as at full formalised unit meetings held each month in rotation in members' homes. At these formal meetings average attendances amount to over a half and usually to about three quarters of the total unit strength.

Many of the rights and duties of unit membership are specific and are formalised through the agency of sub-committees. Each unit, for instance, has a sub-committee that organises its own bible study meetings. Members are expected to purchase two bible study paperbacks (published by the United Church and costing \$2.10c) and an emphasis is placed on regular attendance. The units also organise bring and buy sales which involve the preparation and sale to themselves of home made food. At their meetings members drink tea provided by their hostess for which they pay 5c a cup to the unit treasurer, and when a member has a birthday they have a "birthday collection" with the member concerned contributing to unit funds as many cents as her age.

Funds obtained in these ways are administered by the unit treasurer and dispersed to unit members. Some may be spent on providing fruit and flowers for sick members; some given as welfare grants within the unit or dispersed to charities outside it, and amounts considered surplus are often contributed direct to central church funds. All these activities take place in members' homes.

Besides these more formalised occasions, unit members

also meet informally in their homes to chat or to perform services for each other. One member of a unit might have access to food or provisions obtainable at a special price and these could well be distributed through unit friendships as well as through kinship contacts. On one occasion, for instance, when the retail price of salmon in the shops was 80c to 90c a pound - a high priced dish for longshoremen's families - it nevertheless appeared on the family and boarders table. My landlady had obtained her salmon "from a unit friend" at 40c a pound.

The activities of all 12 units are linked by the performance of tasks in common, such as cooperation and competition in special fund-raising and welfare schemes and by their acting in rotation to provide various services for the church. Each unit, for instance, is expected to delegate some of their members to cook for the men's meetings which, unlike those of women (which are held in their homes) are held in the Church Hall. Each Married Women's Unit has the obligation to act in rotation in providing this monthly service.

A particular function of the units - which is derived from their supply of what can be termed 'Insurance Services' - is to minimise economic insecurity. The analogy with insurance is an apt one. Members of units invest "premiums" of time and material: in return they are assured of collective help in cases of misfortune.

There are three scales of misfortune, each of which brings forth a reallocation of resources from within the

units and the church as follows:

Firstly, a relatively minor disaster, such as a unit member's husband losing his job through illness, might bring forth a collection from within the unit that can amount to £15 or £20. In such a case too the church's Job Seeking Committee, composed of congregants who are employers of labour, might help to find a new job for the man if this proves necessary.

Secondly, the death of a breadwinner with young children can involve a collection from all the units that has on occasions amounted to over £50, with perhaps also a welfare grant from central church funds when this is considered necessary.

A third class of misfortune, one that seriously affects a family's home and property, will bring forth a wider level of support. The Minister recounted a case that had occurred a year before fieldwork began:

A woman whose family had not been too good in their church attendance but who was active in her unit, and her husband who was unemployed, suffered a disastrous fire; their home was destroyed⁽⁷⁾, and two of seven children burned to death. Support for them was mobilised from three directions. Firstly the neighbours made a community house to house collection which raised over £2,000. Secondly, the Church Executive gave a grant of £100 to cover rent for three months. (The area covered by the church is a relatively low rent area compared to the city as a whole.) Thirdly, all the 12 women's units collected nearly £50, and provided

a new set of six tubular chairs and a table. In addition, the units largely restocked the new home with secondhand furniture, clothing and other household equipment. Both unit and Central Church support was mobilised by the woman's own unit.

In commenting on this case the Minister remarked that the family was better off materially after the fire than before it and that "now the family attends church much more regularly".

Such activity by the members of this woman's unit obviously required a high degree of organisation and a considerable commitment. This organisation and commitment of women is achieved and maintained by their participation in regular unit meetings such as the one now to be described.

b) Report on a United Church Unit Meeting of Married Women

This meeting was held in the house in which I lodged for a month early in the period of fieldwork. It was organised by my landlady, Mrs Jenkins, a longshoreman's wife of 40 with two young daughters, and it was held after the evening meal on a weekday towards the end of September. It was the unit's first collective monthly meeting of the new season since formal meetings are not held during the summer months. Normally each unit meets for nine or ten such meetings every year.

Tremendous preparations were evident in the week preceding the meeting, and the forthcoming occasion was used to emphasise that this was to be a women's meeting - that men

had no place in it and, most importantly, that on the night of the meeting they would be kept out of the front room. This issue of the special use to be made of the front room - the main sitting room - and the banishment of men from it, were constantly reiterated themes emphasised to husband and boarders alike. The house contained two common rooms; one of these, the kitchen/dining area, was sparsely furnished and uncarpeted, whilst the front room, the central area of relaxation for all the family as well as its lodgers, contained a carpet, an upholstered chesterfield and a TV set. Tongue lashings directed by Mrs Jenkins to all four men in the house were not uncommon - a mild separation of sexual roles was often emphasized - but they were usually delivered in a quasi-jesting manner, thus: "Look at those crumbs on the floor! How am I expected to keep this place clean? Trust a man to make work!", and so on. The normal response to this kind of quasi-joke was to ignore it or, grinningly, to acquiesce. In the week before the meeting, however, every verbal parry ended with a barbed reference to the forthcoming big night, thus: "You'll behave yourself on Thursday night. You'll keep out of the front room then." The element of jocularitas in these feminine barbs became less evident as the week progressed. In discussion of this behaviour with other longshoremen who belonged to the United Church, it appeared quite commonly expected for women to become aggressive before unit meetings. "Women get like that when there's a unit meeting", was a typical longshore response.

Normal household routines were heavily disrupted during the week prior to the meeting. Mrs Jenkins spent much time giving the house a complete clean and she restored, repaired or replaced all visibly dilapidated fittings and furniture as well as preparing food for her guests. The following were the main details of her preparations, all of which were carried out either single-handedly or with the help of her two daughters, aged seven and twelve. Mr Jenkins, who normally did household repairs, albeit under pressure, was neither asked nor did he offer his help in these activities.

1. A new teapot was bought to replace the usual one which was adequately functional, though chipped. \$2.29.
2. New plastic curtains were bought and fitted to the front room. \$1.98.
3. Two new linoleum mats were bought to cover holes in the bathroom's existing linoleum flooring. 89c each.
4. A new door handle was bought and fitted to the door of the front room. (One of the longer term boarders assured me that the original handle had been defective for over a year.)
5. A broken heating stove was mended, cleaned and reassembled in the front room.
6. The bath, which was rusting badly, was painted with white, enamel gloss paint.

7. Mrs Jenkins, aided by her daughters, baked bread and cakes during the week, and purchased an expensively packaged one pound box of chocolates.
8. On the Big Night itself the men absented themselves from the house immediately after the evening meal - except for the anthropologist who stayed in his room. The chesterfield (settee), which was the main item of furniture in the front room, had its polythene cover taken off and put in a cupboard out of sight. (Working-class families in Newfoundland normally retain on their furniture the polythene covers in which soft furnishings arrive from the store.)
9. The linoleum floors of both hallway and the front room surrounds were then polished until they became a gleaming hazard.
10. A hall carpet appeared that I had never seen before. It was brought from its mothballed sanctuary and unrolled to take its rightful place in the hall.
11. Finally, all the ashtrays were moved out of sight to a cupboard although Mrs Jenkins was normally a chain smoker and her unit friends also smoked when at the house on non unit business. When asked where the ashtrays were, Mrs Jenkins replied, "United Church Women don't smoke".

Before the meeting began two of Mrs Jenkins' friends arrived to help with final preparations. These friends were

the Unit President and Secretary, respectively mother and daughter. The mother's husband was a longshoreman though the daughter's husband worked off the waterfront. Their contact with Mrs Jenkins had, however, preceded her Unit membership, and was initially obtained through common residence in a different part of town and not through the common occupation of their husbands. "I knew them on the battery", said Mrs Jenkins: this was where she had been born and reared.

The two children were then put to bed at a time much earlier than usual and with an exceptionally gentle admonition from Mrs Jenkins that there was to be "no peeping". This contrasted wildly with her normal method of raucous control.

As the three women bustled about making preparations for the arriving guests they kept glancing nervously into the street to see if, as it turned out, the Vicar's wife was approaching. My presence at the scene proved a minor embarrassment to the two ladies, probably to all three, and the President muttered something to Mrs Jenkins, presumably about my being there. Mrs Jenkins said nothing in reply, but tightened her mouth as she glanced in my direction, and I deemed it advisable at that stage to withdraw to the boarders' room.

The women then started to arrive in ones and twos. They each wore their best Sunday clothes and brought a small parcel of goodies, the majority of which remained uneaten and were left behind at the end of the evening. Eight out

of nineteen members finally assembled⁽⁸⁾, and as each arrived their coats were taken and they were ushered into the front room. When only two members had still to come, Mrs Vicar arrived. She was the only visitor who did not bring a goodie parcel and one was not expected because, as Mrs Jenkins later explained, "she was a guest". Her role was, therefore, emphasised as distinct from that of other guests. She was treated with great deference; her coat too was taken, but instead of entering the front room she was immediately taken around the freshly cleaned house by Mrs Jenkins.

They visited each room together except the children's room and the room in which we boarders slept. This 'backstage' area remained uncleaned, with the boarders' broken window unrepaired and the room's defective door latch unreplaced. As the two women made their tour, the Vicar's wife expressed continuous and lavish praise for Mrs Jenkins' household abilities: "You have a lovely home, I don't know how you manage to keep all this so clean and do so much for the Church. What a beautiful colour that is, isn't it? Are your children in bed? How quiet they are!" When this tour of inspection was complete both women returned to the front room to join the assembled unit.

The formal meeting that followed consisted largely of hymn singing, a short prayer service presided over by Mrs Vicar which it was difficult for me to hear, and a longer period of chat about people and church events. One particular remark from Mrs Vicar was that "women must 'soldier on', because - alas - men are very imperfect as

yet. It is, therefore, up to the women ...". The evening concluded at about 11.0 p.m., the Minister's wife being the first to leave.

The day following the meeting showed Mrs Jenkins in fine spirits and the tension, so evident in previous days, quite evaporated. The ashtrays reappeared, the carpet was rolled away and the polythene covers replaced on the chesterfield. Mrs Jenkins joked again with her husband about his dirty habits and repeated to husband, boarders and a neighbour the praise that had been bestowed by Mrs Vicar. Of the inspection she commented, "Laugh! I didn't tell her the carpet was specially down!" Mrs Jenkins had returned to the world of the secular!

c) Analysis of the Meeting : Rites of Inspection

This meeting, with its attendant inspection, can be understood as similar in many ways and usefully to be compared to the more familiar General Officer Commanding (G.O.C.) Inspections, which are a regular feature of army life. Once a year the senior officer commanding an area or division descends on each barracks under his overall command and makes an inspection of both personnel and equipment. The barracks is a scene of bustle, activity and tension for weeks before the visit. Many improvisations and deceptions are practised to put out a good show on the day. The General makes his inspection, congratulates everyone concerned and goes away, as everyone hopes, until the next inspection. Men and officers then relax and familiar

and slacker routines once more are re-established.

Such inspections⁽⁹⁾ represent a statement in dramatic form, of values which are held to some degree in common by all the actors, however separated they may be by their respective positions in the structure. There is thus a conspiracy among lower participants to deceive the senior officer, of which he himself is as aware as is everyone else; he, after all, was a subaltern at one stage of his career and therefore, presumably, a party to similar inspections as a relatively low participant. The visits, however, serve to demonstrate common knowledge and to reaffirm the value of a set of ideal standards. They serve too to link the involved parties by their participation in a common activity.

Mrs Vicar's inspection was also, in a very real sense, part of a conspiracy. Like the G.O.C.'s on their tours of inspection, she too was well aware that the show in which she was participating was a special occasion. She has experience of visiting the houses of her husband's congregants at normal times - for instance when they are sick - and she could, therefore, not but be aware that the high standards of cleanliness, tidyness and behaviour found on an inspection are not normal - in the sense of typically relevant - to everyday standards.

As a full participant in this type of conspiracy, Mrs Vicar knew not only what to notice but also, and perhaps more importantly, what not to notice. Hence she tactfully made no comment on not being shown two of the rooms: the

boarders and the children's rooms.

The values which were expressed and reiterated during her visit are those concerned with the ideal performance of the married woman's role - the virtues of being a good housekeeper and mother - of cleanliness, order and control. It is these virtues which Mrs Vicar made explicit in her paeon of praise and which Mrs Jenkins was pleased to repeat after her departure.

It is significant that the whole meeting and its prior preparations were carried out by Mrs Jenkins, her two daughters and her unit friends. Men had no place at the meeting or with its preparation, and their lack of function was strongly emphasised all the time preparations were being made. Even the leading spiritual role commonly observed within the Christian church to be in the control of men was, on this occasion, seen to be played by a woman.

In one sense the meeting can be understood as a reflection of the common separation of men's and women's roles in this society. But the preparations for the meeting revealed behaviour that, in fact, contrasted sharply with the normal expectations of behaviour from married women. Instead of following the role associated with an equable joking relationship, Mrs Jenkins became aggressively dominant. This was apparent not only in her conversation but also in her usurping of the front room⁽¹⁰⁾, and there is reason to believe that such behaviour is institutionalised. "Women get like that when there's a unit meeting". Her behaviour, therefore, can be understood as being relevant to a rite of

reversal. The fact that this kind of feminine behaviour contrasted so sharply with normal joking behaviour can be understood, therefore, not as serving to weaken the established relationship between the sexes but to reinforce it. By acting in a manner that is stylised and out of normal character on one occasion in the year, women in fact serve to emphasise the normality of their contrasting behaviour during the rest of the year.

For the women who attended Mrs Jenkins' meeting and who gave of their time and their parcels of goodies we can note two principal benefits. These are concerned with their day-to-day role as housewives and with their relationship to the unit's function as a welfare agency. Firstly, they were seen to participate in a collectivity which reinforced the secular values in which they believed but which, in the normal circumstances of life, must have been under constant strain. These secular values were, however, firmly linked to the world of the sacred through the presence of the Vicar's wife and by the hymn singing and prayers which were a central feature of the meeting. Mrs Vicar's comment, "Women must soldier on because - alas - men are very imperfect", placed these subservient secular activities on a superordinate spiritual plane: though women might be socially inferior they are in fact spiritually superior.

At the same time, and because the units act economically as a redistributive agency, the women who were present can be seen to pay "premiums" against the possibilities of future economic misfortunes. By being in good standing with their unit they thus assure their access to

several varieties of church welfare should these be required by them in the future. In this way women supply an important economic function for their families: they are able to provide a buttress against considerable economic uncertainty while simultaneously asserting their independence from men.

3. Family Reputation, Church Standing and Social Mobility

St. John's is a city where family social position is important in determining an individual's prestige. Such ascription is dependent on a number of factors: most important of these is occupation, which is contributed by men; and piety, which derives largely from women.

Longshoremen in St. John's are particularly sensitive about their low occupational status. Men are still indignant at a certain radio commentator's remark made several years previously, that he objected to "dirty longshoremen" using the city's transportation system. There is also antagonism to the city's financial institutions which, they claim with some justice, are prejudiced against granting credit to longshoremen. There is criticism, too, of the police who, they say, occasionally move longshoremen on when they talk in groups on the streets for no apparent reason other than that "We wear overalls so they know we're longshore". When longshoremen were asked if they wished their sons to follow them on the waterfront, only 4 out of 81 questioned said that they would. Some laughed at the question as too ridiculous to bear serious enquiry. One banged his fist loudly on the table and shouted, "That's what I wouldn't, Boy",

while another leaned forward and with a flourish said, "If I had a son who said he'd go in for longshore - I'd cut the two legs off from under him!"

This negative contribution to a family's standing derived from the father's occupation can, however, be alleviated by the piety of the mother. This apparently provided at one time the most important source of social mobility in Newfoundland. Employers would either seek out or be prevailed upon by Ministers within their Church to grant favourable positions to the sons of pious mothers - often despite the low occupation or reputation of their fathers. I was told that this aspect to employment was still significant, though universalistic standards were becoming more evident; often these operated together. One employer said that if he had two equal candidates, both with Grade 11, the job would certainly go to the one whose family was the most respectable. He added, "if the mother is a God fearing woman this would certainly be an advantage to any boy looking for a job".

One important form of social mobility is via the priesthood, and this applies to all the city's denominations. Some of the principles that operate in the selection of priests would, not surprisingly perhaps, seem to be the same as those which operate in other fields. This became evident from a discussion with two longshoremen when the question arose of father's occupation and the training of sons for the priesthood. "Let's not beat about the bush - they don't like longshore sons" said one. His friend nodded

firmly. "Jim's son here", he continued, "is very intelligent, but he had to be trained in Manitoba: that was really a slur on his father".

This case was then crosschecked with four longshoremen of the same denomination. All knew that Jim's son had been accepted for the priesthood and agreed with the diagnosis given - that if the father had been considered respectable, i.e. had worked off the waterfront, his son would have been trained in Newfoundland. They further believed that the father's occupation could easily have meant that the son's vocation would not have been met and that the selectors had accepted him only because of the well-known piety of his mother.

Though low occupational status can be a negative influence in assessing family reputation, high achieved status does not necessarily provide a positive influence. Memories are long and previous low assessments can be used to negative high current achievement. One member of the executive who had been engaged in a difficult bout of negotiations with a local shipping manager spoke contemptuously of him, "He's nothing - we were at school together - his family are nothing".

Because the time depth of a family's reputation is important in determining a man's prestige, it was observed that men who discussed acquaintances in the Union would often do so by reference to long ago events. Men would refer with praise or opprobrium to the doings not only of the man concerned but of his brother, father or wife that may well

have occurred many years before. During a Union meeting, and whilst standing in the body of the membership listening to a speech, a longshoreman with whom I was friendly remarked, "I don't trust -- (the speaker). His father was a cunt - very anti-Union in the old --- Company days". The 'old company days' to which he referred were well before the second world war.

Since their family reputations are unlikely to be enhanced through occupational achievement, much emphasis is placed by longshoremen on the religious contribution to family prestige. The following case shows how this brings its own insecurity.

One late evening two longshore friends and myself were drinking home brew in my flat. One mentioned in passing that his daughter was a nun, and he was obviously very proud of what he regarded as a family achievement. I asked why he had never mentioned it before and why he appeared to be so reticent about something of which he was obviously so proud. Why had he never, for instance, mentioned his daughter in the Union Hall? Why indeed were these matters rarely mentioned at all? "You don't mention this about the Hall", he replied, "because the very worst thing of all - she could decide to leave the convent. Also, besides, it's not right to mention this because there's plenty of men who have suffered the tragedy of having children who came out. People will say they aren't good enough - it leads to backdoor gossip. It's never mentioned that you've had children in because you

can fall and because it rubs other people too sensitively. Besides, it invites attack - there was that case of a longshoreman whose daughter is a nun - and his wife was accused of robbing a man some years ago."

On this interpretation, a family's high reputation is seen as competitively achieved and tenuously held; its very possession increasing the chances of its dissolution and giving rise to the fear that it might not be maintained. Its value once achieved, however, is considerable, not only in the granting of personal prestige to all the members of such a family but in aiding the social mobility of its children. Amongst longshore families this is seen to be largely effected by the piety of women who are, thereby, enabled upwardly to modify the low prestige derived from their husbands' occupation.

4. Religion on the Waterfront

From an examination of the religious composition of the Union it might be thought that Catholics and Protestants are equally influential within it. The Union's active membership is slightly over-represented among Catholics, who comprise 55% of its number, and the proportions of the two groupings found in the preferred category of regular men, as compared to the relatively deprived outside men, roughly follows this proportion. This apportionment of men to jobs is illustrated as follows:

	<u>R.C.</u>	<u>Protestants</u>	<u>Religion Not Known</u>
Regular Members of Gangs	184	140	6
Outside Men	81	76	11
	<hr/>		
Totals	265	216	17
	<hr/>		

It may thus be deduced that good and less good jobs on the dock are either distributed irrespective of religion - so that a normal proportional balance is effected by random means, or, alternatively, that a rigorous proportional allocation takes place which ensures that job allocations remain in congruence with religious proportions. A closer examination of relationships found at work reveals, however, that the allocation of men to work in gangs is only one aspect of a three-part system which serves to balance religious patronage on the waterfront. These are seen firstly to affect the election of men to Union office which is in the control of Catholics; secondly, to govern the selection of men to serve the Union or to act as its consultants, which also is operated in favour of Catholics; and thirdly, to influence the appointment of gang foremen who are predominantly Protestant.

a) Religious Influence and the Holding of Union Office

With only one exception, both of its senior paid positions, that of Union President and Union Delegate, have, since the Union's foundation in 1903, been occupied by

Catholics. Most executives have also contained a high proportion of Catholics, the last five committees never containing more than two Protestants within the executive's nine positions.

This dominance of Catholics in leading positions of the Union appears surprising on first enquiry since the Catholic proportion of the total membership is approximately 55% and this has apparently remained fairly constant over the years. Executives, however, have never reflected even an approximation to this percentage. The explanation for this Catholic dominance lies in the undifferentiated block vote exercised by the Union's Catholic members. In contrast, the non-Catholic, Protestant vote is segmented amongst a wide variety of sects. No figures are possessed of the proportional membership of these Protestant groups, but the Union's total Protestant vote is divided amongst members of the United Church, the Church of England, the Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventists and several other nonconformist religious groupings.

Religion, therefore, represents the first and perhaps the most basic split within the Union membership, and this division into Catholics and non-Catholics is represented in the Union hierarchy. It provides at a micro level an example of the wider religious schisms so evident within Newfoundland society generally and which, as we saw, affects political voting in the Province. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that the same mechanisms should be observable within the Union as outside it and that religion should thus

be revealed as a most important qualification for the holding of Union office.

b) The Predominance of Protestant Foremen

Whilst longshoremen as a whole are 55% Catholic and 45% Protestant, the vast majority of foremen are found to be Protestants. Of the 11 main wharf foremen no less than 9 are Protestants and only 2 Catholics. The superintendents who have made this selection are, and have been, both Catholic and Protestant and therefore a simple explanation in terms of the recruitment of co-religionists is unsatisfactory.

One hypothesis to explain the preponderance of Protestant foremen is that they are recruited by management as a form of opposition to the predominantly Catholic Executives. It seems that management, realising extra claims can be made upon a Catholic foreman by a Catholic Executive, prefer to recruit men not subject to this extra pressure and do this by the appointment of Protestants. This, however, is a difficult proposition to prove or even to discuss since questions of religion are normally tabooed in conversation on the waterfront, and with the decline in port activity few new foremen have been appointed in recent years. When questions of the religion of foremen are raised with managers they claim no knowledge of their affiliation, and express a reluctance to discuss the subject. It is unlikely that, in fact, they are ignorant of the religion of foremen since

"everyone knows everyone else's religion in St. John's", and religion is basic to much of the social organisation of the city. It seems clear their reluctance derives rather from a fear of involvement in what is a potentially explosive situation. This reluctance to discuss questions of religion was also found to be common among both Catholic and Protestant longshoremen except in rare situations of crisis.

The two Catholic foremen do not appear to suffer any particular disadvantages or enjoy any advantages in their relations with the Executive - nor do their employing companies appear disadvantaged by their selection. The gang of one of these foremen is rated by one manager as one of the two best of six gangs on his wharf.

Though foremen have some influence on the composition of their gangs they do not use this to hire predominantly Protestant or Catholic gangs, as was found, for instance, in the Manchester docks⁽¹¹⁾. In St. John's, no gang was found to include more than 19 of its 28 positions within one religious category.

c) Executive "Fiefs"

Since Catholics effectively control Executive office within the Union they, therefore, come to control resources held in the power of the Executive. Such a post as that of Union Hall janitor, for instance, which in 1963 was worth \$3,000 a year, is disposable by vote of the Executive. This is a post which, until that year, had been held by Catholics.

In 1963 the post became vacant and its new incumbent was, for the first time, a Protestant. He was, however, generally held to be by far the best applicant for the job - being known as an eminently sober man of extreme respectability. In addition, he had married into one of the waterfronts leading Catholic families. In this case, therefore, we can appreciate that secondary and more technical criteria might, exceptionally, be applicable in specific situations. Other "fiefs" seen to be in the Executive's control and exercised in favour of co-religionists are contracts granted for maintenance of the Union Hall and specific consultancies where these are required in such professional areas as the law and surveying.

It appears, therefore, that the influence of religion in the port of St. John's - as in the city itself - is of considerable effect in allocating men to jobs. Since, in a region of such high unemployment jobs are one of the scarcest of resources, it might be expected that such "non-technical" allocations would prove disruptive. This is not so for two related reasons. The first is that religion as a topic of discussion is, as stated, normally taboo on the waterfront; the second is that religious patronage is balanced between the main contenders. It is only when this balance is thought of as being in jeopardy that disruption occurs and the taboo broken.

A good example of such disruption and the breakage of this taboo occurred towards the end of fieldwork when the management of one wharf decided to lay off 4 of its regular shed staff. In the absence of any procedural agreement

covering redundancy it was not, at that time, known which men would go and a group of checkers during a slack period in the shed were discussing the possibilities. One of the men, a Protestant, angrily interrupted the discussion. "You know who'll be laid off - if you're a Mick (i.e. an R.C.) you're solid".

His interpretation was based on the religion of the manager responsible for redundancies, known to be an R.C. The statement, uttered in a group of some ten men, caused an immediate and angry reaction directed at the speaker. The men present included both Protestants as well as Catholics, but reaction was, if anything, stronger among the Protestants. One Protestant almost fought the speaker and had to be held back⁽¹²⁾. "You shouldn't say that kind of thing", he shouted.

This was one of only two such cases of religious animosity which were expressed to my knowledge during fieldwork. The other also involved a man's concern over the loss of his job. This second case took place when I was new to the field and concerned a regular skidsman who was Protestant and who was dropped (but only temporarily as it turned out) by his Protestant foreman. His replacement was a Catholic. After the shape up at which he was unselected he moved from the wharf and, fulminating privately against the foreman to me, as an outsider, called him "a cocksucking turncoat". He explained that the foreman had married a Catholic.

A principal reason why religious patronage was not found to be disruptive can be seen, therefore, to lie in the same balancing of patronage between the main religions on the waterfront as is found in the city itself. The troika principle on the waterfront⁽¹³⁾, however, results in elected Executives who are Catholic being opposed by selected gang foremen who are Protestants whilst these, in their turn, are seen to maintain the balance by hiring approximately equal numbers of Catholics and Protestants. This system of religious patronage is found to be buttressed by an understanding which forbids its direct reference in normal conversation.

5. Church Hierarchies and "The Grass Roots"

So far our analysis has concentrated on religious sentiment and affiliation as these have influenced relationships at an observable, "grass roots" level. In the process, however, we have necessarily become involved with the wide ranging interests of the churches in St. John's, particularly in economic and political matters. It is to be expected, therefore, that the churches as organisations with interests in these fields would be dependent on up-to-date information if their interests are to be maintained. The passage of such information necessarily involves a contact between secular adherents in key positions and the hierarchies of the churches concerned. It is, in fact, well known in St. John's that such contacts exist. When, for instance, I

gave an evening course for trade unionists in the city I was told, "Hello - so-and-so's here - it'll all be back with the Archbishop in half an hour".

It can be appreciated, however, that producing the evidence of such contacts involves discussing material of an extremely sensitive nature - especially where such material essentially involves the secular activities of a multi-religious trade union. Accordingly, the following material, which does not relate to the L.S.P.U. and is derived from correspondence supplied to the author, will be offered in an attenuated form. It is hoped that this will hide the identity of the author, who was highly placed in St. John's, and that it will reveal neither the Union concerned nor the Church involved. It is hoped that this example will at the same time, however, illustrate the nature of this articulation between adherents in key secular positions and the hierarchy of the Churches. It is sincerely hoped too that the impact of its publication will be considered no longer as volatile as might normally be the case, since the material is now over 20 years old.

The principal evidence is in the form of a letter, dated in 1949, and concerns the problems facing the Island immediately after Confederation with Canada. At that time many people in St. John's were apprehensive about the intrusion of N. American influences - particularly as these were likely to affect labour. The letter, addressed to the principal dignitary of one of the Island's Churches, is as follows:

"There are certain events occurring in Labour circles the details of which you may desire to be informed. It has been my lot to attend several conferences during the past few weeks. You may have noticed increased Union Activity and you may have also noticed that there is in Newfoundland at present a Regional Director of the American Federation of Labour. He asked for permission to meet the Union and it was placed in such a manner that it could not be refused because of former commitments to local Unions

"Things have been happening in Labour Circles. We estimate there are at least a thousand in the Island with definitely subversive ideas and convictions. These convictions would include such "isms" as Nationalization of Power, telephone, Pulp and paper Industry, etc. and some rather weird plans for subsidizing certain factors contributing to the extremely high cost of living. These ideas are current at Grand Falls and Corner Brook.

"You may be aware that Bell Island Union has a C.I.O. Affiliation and that Canadian C.C.F. Political Party had a member travelling the Island. He was a former C.I.O. member and by them trained for organization work.

"The C.I.O. have little influence north of the Industrial centres in the United States and apparently they are anxious to place themselves there as securely as they have (elsewhere). The more conservative element is the American Federation of Labour. Both appear to intend to make efforts to have control of Newfoundland Labour. These

are worries unknown to us before this Blight of Confederation hit our Country.

"The American Federation of Labour have sent to Newfoundland a Mr. He comes from Washington not from Ottawa. This is most probably a catering to our feelings here. He is a young man, suave, well educated, conservative, firm in his convictions and I gathered experienced with sound judgment - more of the professional type.

"He approached the Union to have it join the Local Federation of Labour. The (Union) refused. He (presumably then) requested that we join the American Federation subsidiary and not join the local Federation, and that we organize those parts not yet organized. We have said we had a plan already afoot with respect to the latter.

"We wished to know what it would cost us and how much interference there would be with the local unit, if we joined the (A.F.L. subsidiary) only and it would cost about per man, that would be about \$8500.00, annually. They would pay certain salaries and the net amount to them would be about \$5000.00 payable by the members of the Union. We would participate in their strike fund and they would materially assist in strikes which ought to be discouraged.

"We then discussed the situation if we remained as we are. It was thought the way might be a little rough or difficult if there were C.I.O. and F. of L. influences here.

"The Union are anxious to preserve their identity as much as they can. The C.I.O. is out of the question but we cannot let Mr. know this as it is our ace card in negotiations. Any affiliation must be with the (A.F.L. subsidiary)

"There is a final point. Sooner or later Unionism here is going to do in Newfoundland what was done in the United States in the last Election. It defeated Dewey and hence made the President. I understand during discussions between the local Federation and, the question of politics and the part of the Unions in it was freely discussed, not with a view of forming a party but with the objective of influencing an election. Truman seems to have taught them a lesson.

"I thought this account should be in your hands and I feel secure in leaving it there as the details are confidential. If you are interested in being kept au fait with important trends in this direction, it shall be my pleasure.

Respectfully Yours,"

It may be argued that this fragment of correspondence, detailed though it is, presents only an isolated example of articulation; that there is no evidence of an agreement between the two to supply and receive information or that the Church in this case was even interested in the matters raised - let alone that it affected policy to any degree. For such data to be regarded as significant, this argument would run, it would be necessary to prove at least that it

was part of a flow; to show that such communication was in fact an institutionalised aspect of relationships within the city.

In reply it can be said that the letter's author was an astute participant in the city's political, religious and industrial scenes, whose experience in these fields extended over thirty years, and who held high lay office in various church organisations. It seems, therefore, unlikely that such a man would write such a letter unless he knew how it would be received or that this was his first such contact with the Churches' hierarchy. At least one more letter in similar terms was, in fact, sent by the same writer to the same addressee some three months later, which suggests that the first provoked no lack of interest.

The writer, in favouring "the more conservative element", followed an approach to Union problems on strikes, strike funds and affiliation that would seem to have been ideologically arrived at rather than reached from any pragmatic interpretation of the Union's interest. In this his approaches were congruent with that of the church under discussion, but it is impossible to determine how far this congruence involved any influence of either on the other. What can be stated, however, is that the presence of this letter confirms a close articulation between adherents in key secular positions and the hierarchy of at least one of the churches in the island.

There is a postscript to this account. This particular Union, in the event, neither affiliated nor operated a strike fund: the employers, however, did come

under the control of N. American business interests. This combination of massively strengthened employers on the one hand and an isolated Union on the other was subsequently to prove disastrous for the Union.

6. Conclusions

Religion in St. John's is seen to wield a wide range of influence that affects many areas of the city's life. These are manifest in a variety of ways. Firstly, the organised influence of organised religion is evident in the manner by which the churches are seen to be politically significant. Like other politically significant groups they are concerned to preserve and to enhance their interests: their successful lobbying in the period prior to Confederation on the question of church schooling provides a good example of their power in this respect.

A second manifestation, and associated with the first, lies in the use of religiously committed key personnel in secular office who use such offices to further not only the aims and interests of their church but also those of their co-religionists. What Whitaker has called the troika system can be understood here as an acceptance by the most powerful denominations of a division of spoils - of what can be termed a balance of patronage. This balance was observed to operate not only at the level of high public office in the province but also within the Union and on the waterfront.

Both of these aspects of religious influence are directly concerned with the manipulation of resources. They

are seen to depend, however, on a widespread religious sentiment as this is internalised and buttressed by social controls and through which people are seen to practise as adherents. By the acting out of such sentiments people conform to religious values, attend church activities and thus come to be regarded in varying degrees as pious and respectable. In this they highlight a further aspect of religious influence. Since the churches control many of the city's welfare facilities piety can, in effect, be translated from spiritual into secular capital.

Amongst longshoremen and their families, where material insecurity is high and occupational prestige low, the effects of both can be modified by piety. The piety of wives is particularly important in these contexts; it can open the way for social mobility of children at the same time that it provides an insurance hedge against unforeseeable hazards such as fire, sickness, bereavement or a husband's unemployment.

Footnotes to Chapter 3

(1) St. John's, North America's Oldest City, p. 40.

(2) Para. 17 of "The terms of Union of Newfoundland with Canada" states:

"In lieu of section ninety-three of the British North American Act 1867, the following term shall apply in respect of the Province of Newfoundland.

In and for the Province of Newfoundland the Legislature shall have inclusive authority to make laws in relation to education, but the Legislature will not have authority to make law prejudicially affecting any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools, common (amalgamated) schools, or denominational colleges, that any class or classes of persons have by law in Newfoundland at the date of Union, and out of public funds of the Province of Newfoundland provided for education;

(a) All such schools shall receive their share of such funds in accordance with scales determined on a non-discriminatory basis from time to time by the Legislature for all schools then being conducted under authority of the Legislature; and

(b) All such colleges shall receive their share of any grant from time to time voted for all colleges then being conducted under authority of the Legislature, such grant being distributed on a non-discriminatory basis.

(3) Whitaker, 1967.

(4) Whitaker, op. cit.

(5) Faris, p. 170.

(6) See Appendix 4.

(7) Fires, when they occur, are extremely serious in St. John's since the older part of the city is built mainly of wood and has been largely burnt out on three occasions. No specific figures of the incidence of fires could be obtained for the city since surprisingly these are collected on a Provincial basis. The city is graded for insurance purposes in Grade 3 (gradings range from 1 - the best, to 10 - the worst). The St. John's Urban Renewal Study 1961 warns that this rating "must not be construed to mean, however, that the residential areas in the central city are not in need of important fire protective improvements". A purely impressionistic assessment would suggest that this rating appears surprisingly high.

- (8) Apparently an unusually small attendance because
 - a) this was a smaller unit than usual; and
 - b) it was the first formal meeting of the year.
- (9) Goffman, 1961, p. 193, has commented on such inspections but only as they are a particular feature of total institutions.
- (10) For other examples concerning the control of domestic territory see Chapter 2, p. 23.
- (11) Liverpool University, 1956.
- (12) A common method of demonstrating at little cost. See Chapter 2, p. 42.
- (13) For simplicity, only two categories have been adopted here. Most informants were only able to divide co-workers into Catholic or Protestant.

CHAPTER 4

AN INTRODUCTION TO GANGS AND THEIR FOREMEN

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CHAPTER 4

AN INTRODUCTION TO GANGS AND THEIR FOREMEN

1. Introduction

This and following chapters will analytically describe the longshore gang and the relationship of its members to their foreman as these were observed in the St. John's dock. In doing so we might appear to be following an approach in industrial sociology that has been strongly criticised in recent years - that of the human relationists. Following the Hawthorn experiments, this 'school' too gave especial attention to studies of industrial work groups and also came to focus on studies of first line supervisors. It did so in large part with the practical aim of aligning work behaviour to managerial objectives.

Interest in these approaches has declined for a number of reasons. In part, as Faunce declares, this may well be because original exponents have made their points. It is now well accepted that "informal work groups affect output", whilst "The Lewinians have to some extent demonstrated the efficacy of permissive supervision" (Faunce, 1967, p. 286). To a large extent, however, the change in emphasis has followed increasing appreciation of the role played by

technology in determining work behaviour⁽¹⁾. This viewpoint has been well put by Goldthorpe et al, 1968: "The social relationships of the workplace, it has been argued, are not created in 'free space', but are rather significantly influenced by the way in which the actual processes of production are designed and organised; that is, by the way in which work-tasks are specified and work-roles defined, and by the way in which these tasks and roles are related to each other and co-ordinated. In other words it is urged that in seeking to understand social relations on the shop floor, the type of productive technology which is in operation - the set of means chosen by the enterprise in order to achieve its business objectives - must be taken as an essential starting point. Any given form of technology has to be seen as imposing at a minimum certain constraints on the structuring of work relationships and probably as forcing these into certain more or less specific patterns rather than others. While in some situations technical arrangements may compel a high degree of interdependence and thus of co-operation between men on the shop floor, in other situations any sustained form of interaction in work processes may be technologically precluded. Or, again, in some cases relations between workers and their supervisors may be structured in ways which greatly favour a 'give and take' approach or which encourage supervisors to adopt a largely laissez faire position; but in other cases these relations may be so structured that recurrent conflict is made virtually unavoidable - regardless of the attributes of workers or of supervisors as persons.

"With this approach, then, the work group can no longer be regarded as providing the major focus either for sociological analysis or for direct managerial action emphasis is no longer placed on the influence of inter-personal relationships within the group, but rather on the influence of the particular roles which individuals are required to fulfil within the prevailing system of technical organisation. The idea of role-determined behaviour becomes analytically crucial, being symptomatic of a radically sociological reaction against the inherent 'psychologism' of the 'human relations' phase." (The Affluent Worker : Industrial Attitudes and Behaviour, pp. 44-45.)

In appearing to follow a technically determinist approach to the work gang and its foreman we are, therefore, not aiming to examine inter-personal relationships in the gang nor to analyse the supervisory styles of foremen, but for three analytically distinct reasons which are:

- a) That the gang is the basic technical unit in longshore work in that it is technically self-contained - its equipment, personnel and spatial organisation being inclusive - and that additions to the scale of dock operations (other than through containerisation) are usually accomplished only through multiplication of this basic unit.
- b) That in the longshoremen's own definition of their situation they perceive the gang as the basic social unit in longshore work and beyond it in non-work activities outside the dock.

and c) That an understanding of role determined behaviour set within the gang is necessary to understand gang links with outside structures. In particular, we will be concerned with the gang's role as the basic unit in actions against management and as the basic unit in Union political activity.

2. The Shape Up Method of Hiring in St. John's : How A Foreman Hires His Gang

The man who actually hires a gang (or "crowd") on each occasion a ship docks is the foreman who will supervise their work in a given hold. In St. John's a separate gang is hired to work each hold in a vessel and there may well be five foremen, therefore, working simultaneously with their gangs in unloading a normal five hatch boat. (Long-shoremen in the port use the word "hatch" in lieu of hold⁽²⁾). Unlike many other ports there are no 'general', 'stevedoring' or 'supervising' foremen in St. John's whose job is specifically to supervise work on all holds at once, though this task may on occasion be done by the Superintendent if there is an especially difficult cargo to unload or if particular need arises for a vessel's faster than usual turn around. A second difference between the St. John's gang and those in many other ports is that they include in their members stowers who work in the sheds and whose job is to sort and stack cargo that comes from a specific hold. Both holdsmen and stowers are thereby regarded as part of the same unit and they are hired together at each shape up.

(a) Advance Notice of Hiring

How do all the men who attend a shape up come to hear that a particular foreman will be hiring at a specific time? No notices are posted, nor is advance warning given to the Union by the companies⁽³⁾. This information comes from the Company office via the foreman. He will be told by his superintendent to hire men for a specific hatch at an expected time. He then contacts by 'phone certain of his 'key-men', who spread the word to other members of the gang. In this way the information may pass beyond regularly hired members of the gang to selected outside men who enjoy no regular gang affiliation. These 'key-men' are usually men who work on or in the vessel, though in his advance of information to four or five men, one or two may well work in the shed. Thus, though a shape up appears to represent the epitome of casual hiring, we are already able to appreciate that it is in no way the random selection of men it may seem to be.

(b) The Shape Up Observed

The shape up is a highly formalised series of events which are ordered and constant. It begins when a ship docks and is ready to be worked, and the foreman is seen to climb a gangway onto the deck. From this vantage point above the quay he will observe beneath him a crowd of men - each hoping to be hired. The men on the quay form themselves into a horseshoe shape and may number anything from 50 to 70 or even

more, depending on how busy the port is at the time. In summer more ships mean more men employed and correspondingly less men at each shape up; in winter the number of ships is fewer since Montreal and the St. Lawrence are icebound and the size of the shape up is likely therefore to be larger. It is rare indeed, however, for a foreman to find so few men that he cannot fill his gang complement of 26.

The foreman, on the deck above the crowd, holds in his pocket 26 small brass discs. Each one is numbered and as men accept his invitation to "Come aboard, Jack, Jim or Bill" they, in their turn, mount the gangway, collect a disc, then disembark by a second gangway back to the quay. The discs will later be handed to the pay office as a claim for hours worked.

Observation of a shape up reveals that not all men present make themselves available to the foreman. Those actually 'shaping up' stand directly beneath him and, to demonstrate their availability, stand looking up with their arms folded across their chests. Some of them appear almost blasé as of routine they confidently expect to be called. Others, the more marginal, look up hopefully, as they wait for a nod, glance or mention of their name that will tell them they can climb the ladder, that they have been selected. While men wait they are silent. Communication between gang members, normally avid and essentially familiar, is here completely absent. The gang at this point can be thought of as atomised. When men reassemble at the bottom of the disembarking gangway after receiving their discs, familiarity

once more returns. Cigarettes are lit and the gang as an entity is seen once more to have re-emerged.

Others who are present at the shape up, who have apparently also come to be hired, often do not shape up at all, they stand well to the outskirts of the shape up. As the foreman is making his selection they are to be seen chatting, smoking, perhaps moving around in changing groups. They know well that the foreman requires only 26 men. They can gauge by experience when he has more than enough men from which to choose. When enough regulars are present the claim of most of them will not be good enough for a disc. Next time, perhaps, less men will shape up, some of the regulars may not be present and hopefully a place may then be found for them. These prospective longshoremen are mostly the 'outside men' - the men who have no affiliation to a regular gang⁽⁴⁾. Unlike those who shape up with a fair assurance of being hired and who mostly work with one foreman on one wharf, the outside men move from wharf to wharf, and from foreman to foreman, picking up the odd vacancy where and when they can. When a particular hiring is complete most of them drift away to try their luck elsewhere; either with another foreman on the same ship or, later, at another ship perhaps at another wharf. Only exceptionally when a harbour is particularly full does a company hire 'outside gangs' comprised exclusively of outside men.

(c) Obligations and Reciprocities

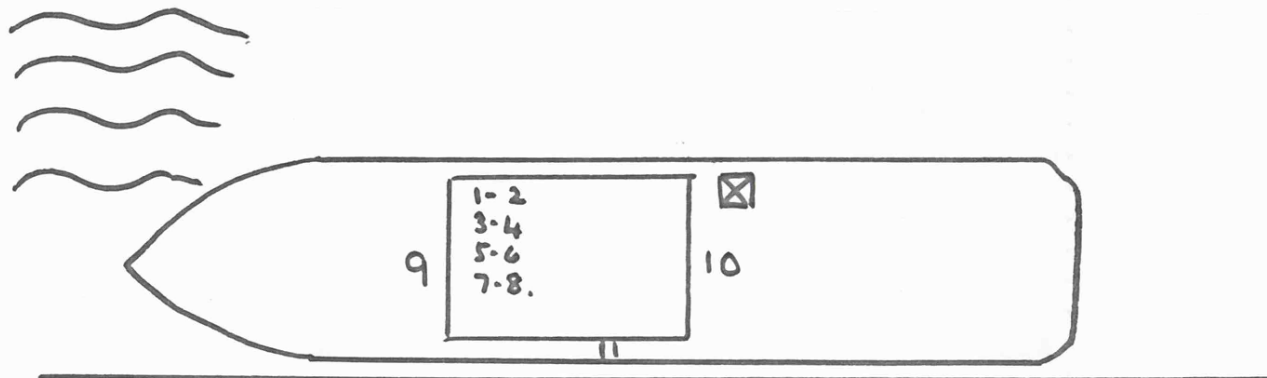
It may at first sight appear surprising why so many men gather to watch a shape up who do not, when there,

present themselves to be hired. When asked why they do this, men will say, "It keeps us out of the way of the women" or "You meet your buddies".

A shape up, however, can also be regarded as a dramatic scene in an ongoing scenario where the audience is as involved as are the principal actors. By their presence men are made aware of the constantly shifting composition of the gangs. Every gang varies slightly in its day-to-day constituency because of sickness, absence or injury, and the alterations in membership at each shape up often provide avid talking points and room for gossip. Why one man rather than another should be selected as the replacement for a sick gang member has, however, other than just dramatic interest for the spectators; it can have important economic implications for them, their friends and their relatives. These implications are particularly important for outside men who, in an insecure hiring situation, are the most insecure of all. When outside men see one of themselves selected to replace a regular gang member, they realise that this can be a first step to more 'permanent' membership in a gang and this is of obvious concern to his field of contacts and 'buddies'. At the very least, such selection, even if essentially casual, can mean that a man is known to earn a few dollars with which to repay his friends an obligatory drink or two.

CHART I.

SHIP



☒ FOREMAN.

1-8. HOLDSMEN.

9-10. WINCHMEN.

11. SIGNALLER.

QUAY

12 - 13.

12-13. SKIDSMEN.

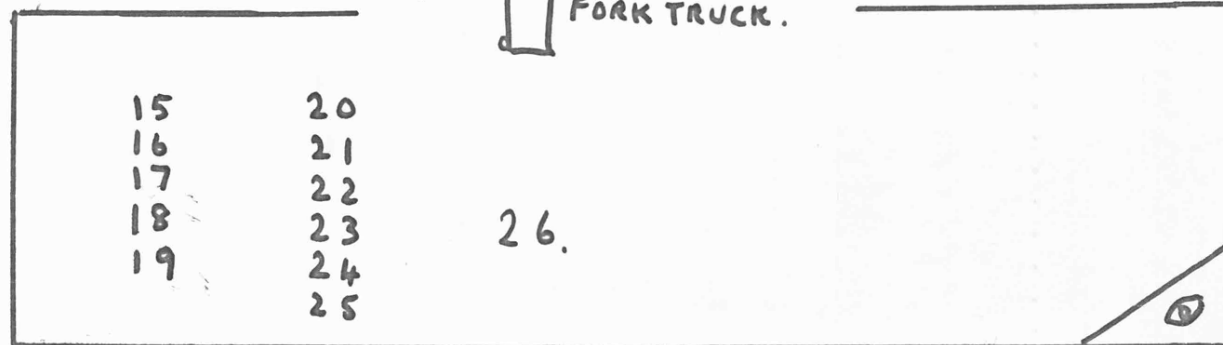
14



FORK TRUCK.

14. FORK DRIVER.

SHED.



15-25. STOWERS

26. CHECKER.

⊙ SUPERINTENDNT.

DEPLOYMENT OF A 26 MAN GANG FOR UNLOADING GENERAL CARGO.

3. Workroles in the Longshore Gang

The following discussion refers specifically to the situation in 1963/4 - the period of fieldwork - when gangs in St. John's contained 26 men. Work gangs in all docks, however, except those handling containerised cargo with considerable mechanical equipment, are constrained to a similar basic structure (Fadem 1967). If a vessel is unloading cargo men must work in the bowels of the ship - the hold. Cargo has then to be lifted out by winch or crane and dropped alongside the vessel onto the quay. It must finally be moved to the shed or warehouse for sorting, stacking and checking. This similarity in the total task to be performed means that the technical system of a dock work gang is, with local variations, universal⁽⁵⁾. The following discussion can be regarded, therefore, as having a wider application than its single source might suggest.

Chart I reveals the situation in St. John's and shows the distribution of a 26 man gang among its different sections. The discussion refers to a gang structure designed to unload cargo since this is the predominant type of gang structure found in the port⁽⁶⁾.

This chapter will be particularly concerned to discuss the gang in technical terms. It will, however, sketch in concomitant social relationships at this stage as these are necessary to understand the essential interlocking of skills involved in most of the gang's work roles and to show how these articulate to form a solidaristic work system.

This chapter can, therefore, best be understood as an introduction to strategies of opposition applied against foremen, to the organisation of pilferage and to off the job social life which are the concern of chapters 5, 6 and 7.

A. The Vessel Crew

1) The 8 Holdmen (1-8)

Men who work in the bowels of a vessel, the hold, often collectively called "the hatchcrew", are organised in four pairs. Where it is feasible, two pairs move cargo to the sling and two pairs load the sling together. Sometimes it is not feasible for all members of a hatchcrew "to sling cargo" simultaneously - its nature or the way it is packed might mean that two pairs of men have to stand by until their workmates have cleared a sufficient space.

A sling is a square board, to each corner of which is fixed a hauser; these are linked to a cable and are usually hoisted or lowered in St. John's by the vessel's own power operated winches. There are two slings to each hatch: each is loaded alternately, and when fully loaded men in the hold pass a signal by hand to a signaller standing on deck who similarly transmits a signal to the winch driver. The loaded sling is raised, swung out over the ship's side and then lowered onto the quay. An empty sling is then lowered into the hold in its place. This in its turn is reloaded, and the process continues until the hold is empty.

11) Winch Drivers and Deck Man (or Signaller) (9, 10, 11)

The two winchmen and the deckman or signaller work

in close unison with each other and with the holdsmen. Perched in the rigging, one on either side of the hatch, the winchmen perform a highly skilled job as, in response to signals of the deckman below, they raise and lower slings in and out of the hatch beneath them and over the side of the vessel onto the quay. They are completely dependent on signals from the deckman since they are usually behind the line of vision to see far into the hatch, and it, therefore, says much for the skill of these three men that accidents are relatively few. It seems almost incredible to an outside observer how, acting purely in response to signals, the winchmen can, with practised ease, deposit a swaying, heavily packed sling, exactly where it is required on the quay from its loading area in the hold while often being unable to see either loading area or quayside.

To obtain such polished, almost elegant, handling demands a rapport between winchmen and signaller that requires considerable time to perfect. "You've got to be buddies to do this job", one winchdriver remarked, "and you've got to understand his signals - they've all got different signals"⁽⁷⁾.

The vessel crew, comprising 8 holdsmen, two winchdrivers and the signaller are, from the viewpoint of the foreman, the most important part of his gang. This is so since they are at the start of the process of unloading cargo and they therefore determine the speed at which other members of the gang must work. This importance of the vessel crew to

a foreman is reflected in the order of hiring followed in a shape up. "The winchmen are always hired first - when he's got his winchmen, signaller and the hold crew he doesn't care about the rest" explained one jaundiced stower. "All he wants to know about is speed", interjected a second stower. "Speed" in this context means the speed of unloading by which a foreman is rated by management. When hatch crews have cleared their holds the vessel can be turned around and can leave port irrespective of whether cargo still requires sorting in the shed. If cargo does need such sorting this will be done by the regular checkers and by foremen who are retained on a regular work week. It is, therefore, only when a foreman has filled his vacancies for men who work aboard the vessel that he selects the rest of his gang - the skidsmen, the truck driver and the stowers who work ashore.

The vessel crew can be regarded as a relatively autonomous group within the larger gang. Not only do they control the foreman's rating by his superiors but they are physically isolated from other members of the gang, work in closer contact with each other than do other gang members, and have a larger say in determining not only their own rate of work but also the rate of all other gang sections. This relative autonomy, allied to a hatch crew's control over output means, as we shall see, that they are in a relatively stronger position than are other gang members to barter a degree of affiliation to the work demands of the foreman. Part of the benefits they derive in exchange is a greater

degree of job security than other gang members possess whilst a further benefit allows them to reinforce their autonomy by the grant of a relatively greater control over their constituency. The vessel crew, therefore, emerges to some degree as the most exclusive section of the gang. This is why, when a holdsman is absent through sickness or injury from the shape up, his place in the hold will always be filled from inside the gang - usually by one of the stowers. The replacement of this stower will then be met by the temporary induction of an outside man into the shed. When I asked an outside man what would happen if he were ever to find himself temporarily placed directly into the hold he immediately discounted the possibility. Then he said, "they'd look at me as if I was a nigger".

One of the results of the exclusiveness and of the relatively greater autonomy of holdsmen is revealed in a remark by the Union Delegate, "Hold gangs are happier on average - the system runs itself". Because of this, when antagonism against co-workers is expressed, which is rare, it is always from shed to hold or vice versa or within the shore gang itself, but in my experience never between members of the same hold crew.

B. The Shore Crew

1) Skidsmen (12 and 13)

Skidsmen work on the quay at the side of the ship. They work as a pair and handle the sling as the winchman lowers it over the ship's side. If the fork lift

truck is waiting to load they manœuvre the contents onto the truck's fork: if the truck is in the shed they see that the sling is unloaded directly onto the quay.

The job is unskilled and rated low on prestige. Skidsmen have no autonomy since their rate of work is entirely set beyond their control by the vessel crew. The job possesses a further disadvantage since its performance is visible to anyone walking along the quay. This means that superintendents or managers can at any time detect an absentee or investigate a pile up of cargo on the quayside. It means further that skidsmen are also inhibited from partaking in pilferage.

To this catalogue of disadvantages must be added the fact that skidsmen, working on the quayside as they do, are also uniquely isolated from the two main sections of the gang, and this physical separation is reflected in their social isolation from off the job activities. Two skidsmen who were interviewed during the administration of questionnaires were asked about their friends (Q. 28). One said he had "no buddies in the Union" and "only drank at Christmas"; the other that he had only one friend - his co-skidsman. When asked what he liked about the job (Q. 40), he replied "the time off - nothing else"⁽⁸⁾.

Other members of the gang's different sections recognise skidsmen as morose and regard them on the whole as antisocial. They are rarely seen in bars drinking with the gang, and one stower expressed the view that "it's a

job for loners".

Because of the isolation and lack of opportunities for pilferage, the job of skidsman is probably the least desired of any in the longshore work gang. A high proportion of these places appear to be filled by relatives of the foreman, but it was not possible to determine the numbers so involved.

ii) Fork Truck Drivers (14)

Truck drivers are regarded by longshoremen as relatively skilled men. The ability to manoeuvre not very easily controlled trucks in and out of narrow passageways is rated lower in skill than the winchdriver's job but higher than the stowers.

The job involves collecting cargo from the quay by fork lift truck and taking it to stowers in the shed. It is a task that can have serious implications for the stowers; a fast moving truck driver, working in unison with a fast moving vessel crew, can set a pace of work beyond limits that stowers consider reasonable. Furthermore, a truck driver not in harmony with his stowers can make their job even more difficult by dropping cargo some distance from their sorting area. In such a case stowers have the extra and onerous job of having to manhandle cargo to where it must be stowed.

The social position of fork lift truck drivers is somewhat ambiguous. Sometimes he is regarded as a foreman's man, "He'll work for the foreman - not the gang - he sets the pace", as one stower remarked. They will, however,

sometimes act as a medium of communication between stowers and the vessel crews when grumbles come from the shed that the vessel crew is "hoisting" cargo too quickly. There is thus an area of ambiguity about their social role which is, in part, a reflection of their physical and technical situation in the gang. Working on their own as they do, trundling their trucks between shed and quay, they are to a limited extent like the skidsmen - though with a relatively greater opportunity to integrate with one of the gang's major groupings. Five of the fifteen regular truck drivers were known to be foremen's relatives and several were single men and therefore lacking in the wider ranging affinal ties which are possessed by many longshoremen. Yet fork truck drivers do not always "work for the foreman". Just as their position in the gang allows them to serve the foreman by, to some extent, setting the pace for shed stowers, so it also allows them to perform certain services for the gang. These services include activities which facilitate pilferage, and their role in the operation of slow ups is considered to be crucial.

Fork lift drivers are seen to drink with the group of stowers much more commonly than do skidsmen, who are more rarely seen in bars with members of their gangs. Truck drivers, however, drink less with their group of stowers than do the average stower. It would appear that the role allows a range of affiliation. It can, at one extreme, be performed in alliance with the foreman against the interests of stowers: alternatively, it can be performed

in alliance with stowers against the foreman. Where truck drivers are chosen by foremen on grounds of skill plus a private interest, such as kinship, it can be posited that their position will involve a degree of role conflict. This is one of the areas of enquiry that could not be pursued because of time limitations in the period of field-work.

iii) The Stowers (15 to 25)

The 11 stowers are divided into two groups of five and six and, working under the direction of the hatch checker, they sort and stack cargo in the shed that has been brought from the quay by the truck driver.

The job is regarded as relatively unskilled and lacking in specific abilities. Amongst the stowing gang are found older men who are "carried" by other gang members, men who have been injured (more often in the hold than elsewhere), men recovering from periods of sickness and newly inducted ex-outside men.

The main concern of stowers as a group is to exert some control over their rate of work which - as we have seen - is largely determined in and on the vessel. "Stowers are always meaning about the speed of lifting" said one holdsman, but they don't have the foreman chasing them."

Since the speed of their work is set outside their immediate control, stowers have come to develop a militant strategy which aims to increase their autonomy.

Their aims are effected both through formal Union activity and through the manipulation of relationships within the gang. Walk offs, which are rare in St. John's, have usually emanated from stowers⁽⁹⁾.

It has been the policy of employers in St. John's, especially since the mid-fifties, to reduce the size of their gangs, and most of these reductions have been made effective by dispensing with stowers. Prior to 1958, when gangs comprised 32 men, there were 15 men stowing cargo in the sheds. By 1964 this number had shrunk to 11 and a further cutback was then scheduled which would further reduce their total to 7. A large part of the stowers' time in St. John's is spent allocating cargo to different importers, and this part of their work is one which other ports have been able to reduce⁽¹⁰⁾.

iv) Hatch Checkers (26)

A hatch checker's job is twofold: to check off cargo against documents and to guide the work of stowers in allocating cargo, in piles, to await individual consignees. This initiation of action for the stowers by their hatch checker is one reason why they are regarded as the foreman's unofficial deputy in the shed and why their role is ambiguously perceived - not only by themselves - but also by other members of their gang.

One experienced executive member, a stower, described checkers as "unpaid policemen". By this he hastened to add that he knew of no cases where a hatch

checker had actually reported a man for theft, but rather he felt that some checkers limited the amount that men take.

A further contribution to their social ambiguity derives from their relationship to their foreman which is extremely secure. A hatch checker must be literate and is highly skilled at "knowing the marks"⁽¹¹⁾. Since this knowledge is not very widespread and many foremen are illiterate, their value is correspondingly enhanced and they emerge as probably the most secure men in the gang. Further, since their work involves interaction with stowers, who are the least secure of all gang members, the contrast in their relative securities is particularly marked⁽¹²⁾.

This ambiguity in the role of checkers was well demonstrated towards the end of fieldwork when I was attempting to obtain photographs of a group of stowers at their work. A hatch checker was casually directing them where to stow cargo and, as was usual, such direction was hardly evident. When the checker saw my poised camera, however, he entirely changed his work style and the film showed an authoritative arm fully extended in a supervisory gesture of marked superiority. Two other hatch checkers emphasised the clerical, as opposed to the manual, aspects of their job by wearing ordinary clothes to work instead of overalls.

There is, however, no overt tension between stowers and checkers. All the hatch checkers at the time

of field work seemed well established, and relationships between them and stowers were affable. This is probably due to their mutual dependence and the latency of possible sanctions which each can operate against the other. One event may serve to illuminate the nature of this aspect of their relationship.

In 1964 one of the hatch checkers who had a record of sickness went on holiday. His replacement was a shed checker whose position in the shed was regarded as none too permanent and who, it was suspected by some of the stowers, was "after Hughie's place". Whether this was actually so could not be ascertained, but the stowers thought this the case. They, therefore, combined to mis-sort cargo so that the relief checker had no idea where any specific consignee's material would be found. By constantly mixing up different lots of cargo his job was made intolerable and untenable, and his chance of succeeding Hughie made minimal.

The above case demonstrates the dependence of the checker upon stowers. In pilferage, however, as we shall see, the stowers necessarily depend upon the hatch checker. In this connection it is noteworthy that most checkers and stowers enjoy a symmetrical joking relationship. One checker, for instance, was constantly ribbed by stowers about the vast amounts he was usually alleged to pilfer. "Clears 'em out Hughie does, don't you Hughie?" Hughie's reply was always jocular though usually unprintable.

4. Technology and Solidarity

With this description of work tasks and their articulation we are now in some position to consider implications these may show for assessing gang members orientations to their work. In particular, this means considering the gang as possessing solidaristic or other features affecting men's values and behaviour as these can be deduced from the technology with which they work.

Following Goldthorpe et al (1968, pp. 40-1), we would define a solidaristic work group in "ideal type" terms as existing where work is seen as more than a means to an end and implies instead a whole way of life where ego involvement is strong and shared activities are emotionally rewarding. Workers in such groups identify with the group and see it as a source of power (or defence) against management and accordingly "economic returns from work are likely to be sacrificed where 'maximising' behaviour would affect group norms and threaten group solidarity".

In a technologically determinist framework these characteristics would be perceived as facilitated or impeded by technical characteristics, and though these of themselves would not determine the orientation of the gang they would be expected to structure work relationships along or away from the ideal type construct. Again following (but adapting) Goldthorpe, we present these characteristics as they were seen to operate for each work role, in Charts 2 and 3.

CHART 2ASPECTS OF TECHNICAL ORGANISATION FAVOURING
SOLIDARISTIC TENDENCIES IN THE LONGSHORE WORK GANGFACILITATING FACTORS +

	1	2	3
Work Role	Degree of Inter- dependence with other gang members	Degree of Control over work	Degree of Freedom to move
Holdsmen	High	High	High
Signaller	High	High	Medium
Winchmen	High	High	Low
Skidemen	Low	Low	Low
Fork Lift Driver	Medium	Medium	Medium
Stowers	High	High	High
Hatch Checker	High	High	High

CHART 3

ASPECTS OF TECHNICAL ORGANISATION FAVOURING
SOLIDARISTIC TENDENCIES IN THE LONGSHORE WORK GANG

IMPEDING FACTORS -

	1	2	3
Work Role	Spatial Constraints on Informal Group Relations	Other Constraints, e.g. Noise, demands of Machinery	Frequency of Deployment Involving Changes in Location
Holdsmen	Low	Low	Low
Signaller	Low	Low	Low
Winchmen	Medium	Low	Low
Skidsmen	High	High	Low
Fork Lift Driver	Low	Low	Low
Stewers	Low	Low	Low
Hatch Checker	Low	Low	Low

We see that on this basis of such cataloguing of characteristics the gang in the St. John's dock emerges with a high likelihood of possessing a solidaristic orientation. Such a catalogue, however, must be read in conjunction with Chart 1 which can be used to complement the data in Column 1 of Chart 2. Thus "the degree of interdependence with other gang members" becomes of much greater relevance when we know with which other gang members interdependence exists and when we know something of the nature of this interdependence. Chapter 5, for instance, will examine the nature of dependencies arising from co-operation in pilferage - an activity that is highly relevant in structuring relationships but the influence of which is likely to be missed if attention remains focussed exclusively on the formal work requirements of a work role.

For present purposes we can see that the technical basis of gang work segments the gang spatially and socially but that both resulting segments - the vessel crew and the shore crew - are likely to possess solidaristic orientation. We see further that one work role - that of skidsmen - is particularly likely to be both physically and socially isolated from both main sections of the gang. We are also now in some position to appreciate the relationship of gang members and their foremen.

5. Gang Foremen

1) Selection and Recruitment

There are 15 full-time foremen in the St. John's dock and 11 of these are employed by the two main companies. Most foremen had been hiring their gangs for upwards of 15 years at the time of fieldwork, whilst four had been in post for over 20 years. All had been promoted from the ranks of regular gang members, but under the terms of the Union's "closed shop" necessarily retained their membership in LSPU.

The selection of a man to be foreman is made by superintendents of the wharfs on which he works. But, with the decline of St. John's as a port, it was difficult to examine the criteria used by superintendents in the absence of new appointments. Managers have said that foremen are selected from men who are sober, hard working and "who have a following among the men". This question of "a following" is considered by men to be a foreman's most important qualification and emphasises the essential reciprocity involved in their relationship. This emerged in discussion of the constituency of specific gangs. One foreman, for instance, who had been appointed over 20 years previously to general cargo work, was said to have recruited most of his gang at that time from coal handlers with whom he had last worked regularly some two years before. In this way, by recruiting marginal workers to regular positions, he assured himself of a grateful following⁽¹³⁾ and many of his

co-workers of those days were still working for him and giving a level of output considered satisfactory by management. The question of the religion of foremen as a factor in their selection has been discussed in Chapter 3.

Though no systematic collection of data was made on the attitudes of men towards accepting promotion, all men who were approached on this question - some ten or twelve - were unequivocal about their non-acceptance in, as they saw it, the unlikely possibility of being offered the job. A typical reply was "I wouldn't take it - and be everyone's enemy?", while several expressed a view of the job in terms of the solidaristic collectivity of the gang whose loyalty and friendship they were unwilling to forego. These men talked of foremen as company men and of their workmates as buddies. When managers were approached they admitted that there had often been problems in obtaining suitable men as foremen and that this was associated with a reluctance of men to accept promotion.

11) Pay of Foremen

During the after the war and until the mid 'fifties, the difference in take home pay between foremen and other men was never very great, though their pay, then as now, included 10 cents an hour more than the usual longshore rate. This similarity in the pay of foremen and men came about because of the plenteous amount of work available along the waterfront at that time. After the mid 'fifties, however, and because of the factors discussed in Chapter 1,

the amount of work in St. John's began its slow decline. This hardly affected foremen, however, who when not employed working a ship are kept on by the stevedoring companies to do general stacking and sorting work in the sheds. Thus they enjoy a guaranteed work week though shed work is paid at only approximately three-quarters of the full foreman's rate. When there are no ships to work the men - unlike their foremen - enjoy no fall-back pay and they earn nothing during such slack periods. It is because slack periods increased in number during the late 'fifties and the 'sixties that pay of gang members relative to the pay of foremen fell from an estimated three-quarters of a foreman's pay in 1954 to under a half in 1964. In that latter year the average foremen earned a little over £4,000, whereas members of their gangs earned only just over £2,000, whilst the pay of outside men was even lower - they averaged only £1,200⁽¹⁴⁾.

The 10 cents differential per hour enjoyed by working foremen has not been increased during this ten-year period. When I raised this with a group of Executive members and suggested that surely in this point there would have been good arguments for an increase in the differential, they acknowledged that management would probably be quite willing to increase the hourly rate for foremen. As an Executive, however, they were against the idea of giving foremen even more money than they already received. Their view was expressed in political terms - "the body (of the membership) wouldn't take it", and "the men think they get too much for doing nothing now".

iii) Duties of Foremen

Unlike most foremen in industry, the St. John's dock foremen still possess powers which, in much of the rest of industry, have long ago been lost to technical and organisational specialists (Gardner and Whyte, 1945). In particular, a foreman in St. John's, as we saw, not only hires members of his gang but he has jurisdiction to fire them for breaches of regulations such as drunkenness or persistent lateness from meals. In other respects, however, foremen were seen to follow many of the orthodox functions of first line supervision as these are seen in most industrial milieus. ⁽⁴⁵⁾ These more usual functions comprise:

a) Planning the Use of Labour

After hiring his gang a foreman needs to allocate the men he selects among the gang's different sections. Normally, since he hires the same men, this produces no great problems but difficulties arise when the availability of his regular men varies. In such cases foremen often have the delicate task of weighing technical preferences against social prejudices. He must know not only the range of technical skills possessed by his men but also the preferences they have for particular jobs, and know not only who will work well with whom but also who will not.

b) Planning the Use of Machinery

The machinery used in unloading cargo is predominantly lifting gear which is mostly situated on the vessel. There are three variables which must be reconciled

by a foreman in deciding which type of lifting gear should be used. These involve considering the type of cargo to be handled; the type of hold (bow and stern holds are narrower than those in the centre of a vessel); and the range of lifting gear available.

c) Planning and Supervising Production

Production in a dock such as St. John's means the maintenance of a steady output of cargo from ship to shed, and in supervising his gang a foreman will be particularly concerned to see that cargo is raised from the hold at a steady rate and that interruptions in work flow are minimal. Once cargo has left the holds a vessel can "turn around" irrespective of sorting and stacking which may still remain to be done in the shed.

d) Dealing with Contingencies

These involve dealing with damaged lifting gear, cargo which has moved in transit and is perhaps unstable and contingencies arising from personnel such as accidents, absences or disputes.

iv) Foremen's Role Strain

None of the duties of foremen are seen by the men as demanding specific skills in scarce supply. Since much of the cargo that is unloaded is repetitive general cargo and since gang members are used to working with each other there is little action that a foreman takes that could not equally well, it is thought, be taken by most of his men. Whereas organising the loading of a boat requires demonstrable skills, supervising the off loading

of a vessel requires little visible skill - especially if, as we saw, much of the cargo to be worked is regularly of the same type. Even power to control the rate of discharge is largely beyond a foreman's control. Foremen are thus seen by their men, therefore, as "parasites", a description they hold in common with all levels of boss who draw higher wages than do longshoremen and upon whom, as they see it, the real work of a port devolves.

If the supervisory nature of foremen's work is perceived by men as uncomplicated, there is also little appreciation of their social difficulties. The "man in the middle" position of St. John's dock foremen is particularly extreme - not only are they at the focal point of conflicting expectations and ideologies, but neither side appears to appreciate their situation as subject to pressure from the other. Members of management, for instance, were all unequivocal in their view of foremen. All managers of every wharf were interviewed and all expressed the view that foremen, as one put it, were "Union men first and company men a very long way second". Several managers, as evidence of this, pointed out that foremen always walk off with their men in cases of dispute. (There are very few 'wild cat' strikes in St. John's and usually 'walk offs' refer to men's refusal to work in what they consider excessive rain.) Such a view of foremen fails to acknowledge their peculiar situation as first line supervisors who are at the same time members of a closed shop Union which also

serves their men. One aspect of such enforced membership is that men are, therefore, able to use Union disciplinary machinery as part of an overall strategy which is applied against foremen. Of 77 charges brought against Union members between June 1953 and January 1964, for instance, 17 were against foremen. Penalties imposed were more severe than against ordinary members: of 13 suspensions from work on the waterfront, the most serious of penalties, 8 were applied against foremen, several for periods of a fortnight and one for 3 months.

Men, like management, have no doubt about their perception of foremen. Of 56 regular and outside men who answered Question 42 (Appendix 3) (on whether they considered foremen predominantly company or Union men), 42 thought them company men, 9 thought them Union men and 3 saw them as having a split affiliation. One expressed the general view as follows: "You're Goddam right, they're co. men".

Foremen's own answers to Q. 42 not surprisingly reveal this ambiguity over their position. Of six foremen, three saw themselves as Union men; one a company man; and two as having split affiliation. In answering Q. 28 on their two best friends: the six foremen listed six other foremen, 1 hatch checker (in another gang), one his own fork lift driver, and two were selected from non-Union members.

6. The Reciprocal Accommodation Between Foremen and Gang Members

With accounts of the operation of the shape up system of hiring, the method of working carried on in a longshore

gang and the role of foremen, we are now in some position better to understand the complexity of the relationship between a foreman and men he selects to work in his gang.

At first sight of a shape up, the foreman appears to be all-powerful as men gather beneath him awaiting their discs. Unlike the foreman in many industries, we saw that foremen in the docks of St. John's still possess formal rights to hire and fire, though with the recurrent nature of the shape up this power might better be described as the right to hire and the right not to re-hire.

Yet, though management state that foremen do, in fact, possess this right, it is apparent that foremen's powers in this respect are subject to considerable limitations. It is not uncommon, when talking to managers, for instance, to hear them discuss the problems of particular foremen as being due to what they call "agitators". On several occasions superintendents have said of a foreman, "Oh yes, he's having trouble because of so-and-so. He's a real bastard - always causes trouble. If we could get rid of him that would be a peaceful gang." And, though the men frequently complained of particular foremen's autocratic behaviour they would, almost in the same breath, suggest ways by which a foreman's power had been or might be curtailed. We also saw how foremen tend to scapegoat their relatives rather than discipline members of their gang.

It became evident fairly early in the fieldwork, therefore, that the foreman's control of his gang was thus by no means as absolute as it appears at first sight. In

particular, the foreman could not get rid of people he disliked employing, and, on the other hand was not able to employ whoever he wished. The foreman in St. John's at least, therefore, could not be said to possess unlimited rights to hire and fire that the operation of a shape up system of hiring seems to suggest, and which most observers appear to accept at face value⁽¹⁶⁾. Because of this foremen are often referred to by the men as "straw bosses". The answer to the apparent paradox of the foreman's power can be understood only by considering the shape up system within the context of unemployment and insecurity in the wider society of St. John's and Newfoundland.

Because employment is scarce, the spectre of unemployment stalks those with work as well as those without it. This fear follows the foreman almost as closely as it follows the men. Indeed, in one sense it can be said to be closer to the foreman because he has more to lose whilst, at the same time, his skills are as specific and therefore are as non-transferable as are theirs. But a foreman can be as secure as anybody in that insecure world so long as his work is satisfactory to his master, the superintendent. It is to the superintendent that a foreman is under pressure to obtain as high a discharge rate as is possible from his gang and he is not expected, without good reason, to fall much below a usually accepted level of output. In order to satisfy the superintendent a foreman, then, needs to supply this rate and to achieve it is dependent on the cooperation and goodwill of the men in his gang.

Like the foreman the gang member is, of course, also subject to the high level of unemployment in Newfoundland and, to this general insecurity, the institution of the shape up adds still greater uncertainty. Each time he shapes up, he is reminded of his weakness. For every boat he works he needs to re-present himself and, however regular his position, he has no formal claims to receive a disc.

But, though the individual gang member is potentially in a weak and insecure position, this cannot be said of the gang as a whole and it is upon the gang as a whole that a foreman depends for his required level of output. So long as a gang are in position to act as a solidaristic work group, they have a weapon with which they can oppose the foreman. If they are sufficiently cohesive, so that they can not only decide upon a policy of work restriction, but can actually carry it out, they are in a strong position to limit a foreman's control. By being able to restrict output they can, in effect, hold a pistol to the foreman's head and use their collective power to obtain concessions which the foreman might otherwise be loth to grant.

Of particular concern to the gang are matters of hiring. If the foreman hires men the gang reject or refuses to hire men the gang considers integral, then they are likely to restrict output. We see, therefore, that to a

very considerable degree the gang comes to possess a degree of control over its own constituency⁽¹⁷⁾. The methods by which it achieves this control are part of the subject of the following chapter.

Footnotes to Chapter 4

- (1) See, in particular, Woodward, 1958; Emery and Trist, 1960; and Sayles, 1958.
- (2) "A hold is a compartment in a ship provided for the carriage of cargo, a hatch is an aperture in the deck of a ship which gives access to the hold, through which cargo may be hoisted or lowered Ships' holds are numbered from the bow of the ship (forward) to the stern of the ship (aft)." (Down and Dove, 1969, p. 128.)
- (3) This system of disseminating information may be seen as encouraging the patronage and need for contacts which is so important in the St. John's dock. It may be contrasted with the situation in Manchester, also a casual labour port at the time it was studied but with ameliorations, where "A blackboard is displayed in the dock office window indicating ships' arrivals and ports of origin, and the likely berth for the ship and the cargo being carried can be deduced from this information". (Liverpool Univ., 1956, p. 59.)
- (4) Termed 'drifters' and 'floaters' by Liverpool University, 1956 (p. 61) and by Devlin (1965).
In St. John's there are no floaters - "who prefer to move around ... rather than attach themselves to particular foremen or gangs". The distinction in earnings between regular men and outside men in the port is too great and work too scarce to allow this luxury of variable affiliation. All outside men in St. John's are, in Liverpool terms, drifters "unfortunate men ... who cannot get themselves accepted as permanent members of any gang". Certainly in St. John's, however, these cannot all be described as "men with poor reputations as workers".
For a journalist's fascinating description of marginal dock workers in Japan, see Meri, 1962.

- (5) This is not, of course, to suggest that social relationships - largely determined as they may be by technology - are in any sense universal; the emphasis here must be seen in the word "local". Even purely technical and functional relationships are open to alternative forms of social organisation, either by managerial decisions, as is well demonstrated by Trist et al., 1963, or by the operation of cultural influences - see Abegglen's study, The Japanese Factory, 1960.
- (6) Copes, giving figures for 1956-8, shows that "the volume of loadings in the port was only one-fifth of the volume of unloadings". (Copes, 1961, p. 77 and Table 9.)
- (7) This lack of practised coordination is undoubtedly one reason why outside men suffer more proportionate injuries than regular men. Their accidents are proportionately 2 to 1.
- (8) Cp. with other gang members' replies to these questions. Of 38 regular men (excluding skidsmen) answering Q. 28, 22 gave the names of members of the same gang. In answering Q. 40 on aspects of work they liked, 19 spontaneously mentioned affective ties in the gang such as "The buddies I work with" or "I like the crowd".
- (9) It should be pointed out that walk offs are not a tactic directed against foremen and that other sanctions are applied against them, as discussed in Chapter 5, which are no less effective and which are less legally vulnerable. Walk offs are in any case uncommon in the port (other than refusals to work in wet weather which are relatively frequent). In part this derives from the Union's control of disciplinary procedures, including fines and suspensions, which it applies rather than face damages from employers for breakage of the contract. In one walk off case, the Executive fined each man \$10 and paid this over directly to the employers as compensation. "That", said the President "was the end of that".
- (10) Thus Oram, writing in 1965: "Recently attempts have been made to reduce the amount of sorting that it has been the practice to carry out in the dock shed. If an importer can arrange to have a parcel of, say, 2,000 cases of oranges, submarked before shipment, in lots of 100 cases from A-T, he can, by having these sorted into separate piles in the dock shed, ensure that they are delivered intact to each of his 20 customers. This means

that a port that is willing to do this becomes attractive to a fruit importer, but neither the ship nor the shed should be used as a warehouse. The function of the former is a carrier and that of the latter a stage in the transit of goods. Many port operators have, under stress of competition in the past, undertaken more and more sorting coming generally within the category of "the merchant's convenience". With the urgent need today of speeding turnaround many operators are having second thoughts; they are rightly declining to allow their expensive port facilities to be used as a preparatory stage to the grocer's shop counter. Warehousing of cargo where every trade process can be undertaken at leisure is a legitimate function of a port, but it should not be attempted amid what was once described as the orderly confusion of ship discharge." (Oram, 1965, p. 31.)

- (11) This knowledge involves being able to recognise the content of packages by code marks on their outside. "Each parcel, known as a Bill of Lading from the covering document of title, bears a separate mark; this is shown, as a rule, on each case, bag or carton. This identifying mark is known as the main mark; often there are sub-marks that denote the shipper or the quality and size of the contents." (Oram, 1965, p. 31.)
- (12) There is, however, no distinction in the hourly pay of checkers compared to stowers. As with other gang positions that demand specific skills such as winch driving, the Union has acknowledged the skill involved but has always opposed the introduction of differential payments. Executive members with whom I raised this issue said they were convinced that such payments would reduce Union solidarity.
- (13) Gouldner's concept of "strategic replacements" is usefully adapted to workers at the lower end of hierarchies as well as the more senior levels he discussed, and can be extended to refer to initial appointments of casual labourers through "strategic appointments". (Gouldner, 1965, p. 72).
- (14) See Appendix 2.
- (15) See Thurley and Hamblin, 1963, pp. 8-16, on whom this discussion of supervisory functions is based.

- (16) The Liverpool University researchers appear to follow Larrows's view here. "A man's success in reaching a 'top six' (i.e. regular status, G.M.) depended entirely on the goodwill of the foreman". (Liverpool University, 1956, p. 72.)
- (17) This question of a group's control over its own constituency is one which has considerable implications in explaining behaviour at work - or indeed elsewhere. In discussions of work group autonomy, socialisation of recruits, homogeneity of values and the determinants of collective behaviour, control over recruitment would appear to be of central - if neglected - concern.

CHAPTER 5STRATEGIES OF WORKER OPPOSITION :
FROM SPEED UPS TO THE BULLPEN

1. Introduction
2. The Opposition of Hold and Shed Men : The Mechanics of the Speed Up
3. The Unanticipated Social Consequences of Mechanisation
4. The Case of "Dog" Hale
5. The Mechanics of the Slow Up
6. The Dog Hale Case Continued : Putting The Foreman in the Bullpen
7. Limitations to the Gang's Power
8. Conclusion

CHAPTER 5STRATEGIES OF WORKER OPPOSITION :FROM SPEED UPS TO THE BULLPEN1. Introduction

It must be emphasised that the description of work tasks that has been given and which from now will be termed "normal working" has so far presented an essentially "unreal" view of longshore work. This is necessarily so since it supplies a static approach to the structure of the gang whereas, in reality, dynamic factors arise and intrude, relationships vary and rates of work differ at different times. Normal working, however, if accepted as an unreal abstraction, will be found nonetheless to be useful as a preliminary descriptive device. It is on this basis that this chapter will discuss how normal working is "adapted" to change in work speed - both fast and slow - and to conditions which lead to an alteration in the relative powers of foremen and their men.

Many of these adaptations involve the gang's ability to act together in alliance against their foreman. This in its turn depends on the gang being able to overcome its main structural division, briefly considered in the previous chapter. This schism - the opposition of interests between the vessel crew and men who work in the shed - must now be examined in greater detail.

2. The Opposition of Hold and Shed Men : The Mechanics of the Speed Up

We have indicated that a foreman's rating with his superiors is dependent on the maintenance of a level of output considered 'reasonable'. This rate of reasonable output in the period of fieldwork involved the discharge of about 15 tons an hour of general cargo. If a foreman consistently fails to produce this level of work from his gang his own position is likely to become insecure. One foreman was demoted in 1964 because his men consistently gave less than the required output. Another put his position as follows: "The Supers are always pushing for output all the time. You can't keep your job here if men won't raise the stuff for you."

On occasion then, and acting usually in response to pressure from above, a foreman will attempt to increase the rate at which cargo is lifted. Such operations are known as "speed ups". Speed ups involve the vessel crew setting a faster pace of work than usual and the operation, therefore, has implications for other sections of the gang, particularly the stowers, since their rates of work, as we saw, are directly set for them on the vessel.

There are two main mechanisms involved in a speed up: the first simply involves holdsmen loading each sling with a greater rather than a lesser amount of cargo. The second is for holdsmen to load and the winchmen and signaller to lift a greater rather than a lesser number of slings in a given period.

There need be no cause for friction between the two main sub-groups of a gang as long as the rate of unloading from a hatch is considered manageable by the stowers. If, however, as in a speed up, holdsmen unload cargo at a rate faster than stowers feel to be justified, then friction between the groups becomes manifest. This is so for two reasons. Firstly, not only does a speed up involve stowers having to process a greater amount of cargo in any given period, but it also is likely to involve them in expenditure of extra effort in dealing with each item of cargo. This is because a speed up often involves cargo piling up close to the stowing area. As a speed up progresses, so this pile up is likely to increase. Newly unloaded cargo then has to be dropped by the fork truck at ever increasing distances from where it must eventually be stowed. It can thus be appreciated that a speed up, although affecting all members of a gang, has a disproportionate effect on the stowers whose rate of physical exertion is likely to increase at a rate faster than that of other workers in the gang. As one stower in explaining normal working put their position, "In the hold the sling is put close to the cargo - no distance to carry it - in the shed parcels may have to be dragged 10 yards or more". In a speed up this distance may well increase to 20 or more yards. Furthermore, if the shed superintendent sees a growing pile of cargo at any stage of its progression from the hold, his criticism will be directed to the men working at that stage.

This criticism, which can have serious implications

for the stowers, may be made explicitly to the man concerned, though more usually it is directed to the foreman⁽¹⁾. In this latter case it could then have an influence in reducing the relative security of the men concerned. A foreman who constantly received complaints from his superintendent about a pile up of work in the shed would then be under pressure to make alterations when hiring his stowers. This enhanced insecurity of stowers is in contrast to the already noted greater security enjoyed by holdsmen. Thus, as a result of the different degrees of their obligation to the foreman, the interests of the two main groups in a gang diverge at this point of output, and it is here that we find the main schisms in the longshore work gang.

There are two methods that the stowers can adopt to limit their holdsmen's tendency to speed up. The first involves passing messages from shed to hold by different messengers. If this fails then the second, and by far the strongest sanction available to stowers, involves the threat and sometimes the actuality of preferred charges against holdsmen which can, if proven, subject offenders to the rigours of Union discipline - fine or suspension.

This second method of attaining control over holdsmen derives from the Union's success in obtaining from the Employers an agreement limiting the weights that can comprise a sling load. These limitations are incorporated in the Union/Management contract⁽²⁾, and they often form the basis of disciplinary charges against holdsmen.

Of 77 charges against Union members in the 10 years between June 1953 and June 1963, 15 were against holdsmen for hoisting overweight slings. This was the largest single class of offence and the one affecting most men. Typical of such a charge is that recorded in the Union minutes for Monday, June 1st 1953. Its record of detail, however, is much greater than usual in that exceptionally it gives examples of mounting pressures applied against holdsmen as well as details of disciplinary sentences given on conviction.

The charge was of 13 men including the foreman, all the hold crew, winchmen and the signallers of one gang, and it reads: "That you did on Friday, May 15th, whilst employed on the SS Perth cause or was a party to causing sling loads in excess of 1200 lbs as laid down in the existing agreement.

"The delegate gave evidence that he had received information (this came from a member of the shore gang - he stated in discussion of the case: 'It's nearly always the shore gang, i.e. the stowers, who raise it') about hoisting of overweight slings, went on board the S.S. Perth, checked the weight, stopped the hatch and questioned the men in the hold. (Since the men on the vessel form an integrated team G.M.) he then also spoke to the winchmen and deckmen (signallers). They said the man on deck spoke to the men in the hold on several occasions and was ignored, he refused to give the go-ahead signal, still it was no good, the winchmen at different times refused to hoist, the men in the hold swore and said take the damn slings out".

Garman, the foreman of the gang, in evidence said that "on one occasion as he came from the shed, someone (presumably a member of the stowers group) said that they were going to get into trouble with the Union through the men in the hold hoisting overweight. He, Garman, then told the men of the hold re the attitude of the men ashore. After speaking to the men re the slings overweight, Garman was called from the hold as he was wanted elsewhere."

In their summing up, the Minutes record that the Executive "are of the opinion that stevedoring operations is started and controlled by the men working in the holds, the winchmen and deckman are in most cases the victims of circumstances. Therefore, the Executive were unanimous in their findings that the men in the hold be find \$10 each. The Deckmen be given a suspended sentence and the Hatch boss (the foreman) a suspended sentence and a letter of warning for the future be given". Details of the suspended sentences were not specified, but I was told that the Deckmen's sentence was a suspended fine and the foreman's a suspended suspension from all waterfront work for a fortnight.

This charge reveals a number of features typical of this class of offence. Firstly the charge emanated from the stowers; they had initially tried to exert informal pressures and these had failed. The winchmen and signallers, in response to the stowers' pressure had then also attempted to influence the hold crew, but also without result. The foreman had been contacted by the stowers in terms that blamed not him but the holdsmen, but this too had had no effect. It was only when

all these approaches had failed that the stowers had then called in the central Union organisation in the person of the Delegate.

In their judgements, the Executive (who as previously discussed largely comprised stowers) felt it necessary to formalise the liability of holdsmen for the pace of operations and to fine them each the relatively high equivalence of seven hours pay. The Executive's suspended, and relatively light, sentence on the deckmen reflects an acceptance of and a sympathy with their dual loyalties as part of the vessel crew and yet as message bearers for the stowers. The foreman's sentence, though suspended, was in effect the most severe of those charged. The warning letter, unique as far as the Minutes record, emphasised the suspended nature of his sentence and reiterated his liability to a fortnight "on the streets". At the same time, by suspending the sentence, it maintained the position of his gang who, in the case of a foreman's actual suspension, would find difficulty in being rehired by any temporary replacement foreman.

A further insight into the nature of this fundamental schism in the longshore work gang can be obtained from a consideration of some events which occurred in 1958.

3. The Unanticipated Social Consequences of Mechanisation

In 1958 the Union, after a six weeks lockout, had to accept a reduction in the size of its gang and the introduction of mechanisation in the form of fork lift trucks. Both events served to exacerbate the already existing schism

between hold and shed. Before 1958, cargo was unloaded from ships onto the quay and reloaded to handtrucks which were then manually propelled into the shed. The vital role of the handtrucker of those days is illustrated in a charge recorded in the Minutes for December 1954.

The charge was against 8 holdsmen for hoisting overweight slings and demonstrates the system of communication whereby complaints of excess weights were passed from shore to ship. It reads: "The two⁽³⁾ deckmen, working with the men charged, were asked from their work to give evidence. They gave evidence in the following:

"'... they didn't notice the sling until it was landed on the hand-truck, the men on the wharf (the handtruck operators) made remarks and complained re the heavy sling, they the deckman then passed their complaint to the men in the hold'".

Before mechanisation, then, when trucks were manually operated, the handtruck operator acted in effect as a filter between the two main sections of the gang. In this role he provided a mechanism which could limit the holdsmen's tendency to hoist overweight slings without this necessarily involving the stowers.

After 1958, and with the movement of cargo between ship and shed mechanised, there was no way for the fork lift driver to gauge the weight on a sling as his predecessor had been able to do. If the weight was too heavy and the sling contained more cargo than it should, then this was not evident

until cargo had actually reached the stowers and had already started to pile up in the shed. With less stowers than previously, the arrival of such extra work was doubly resented. As one stower explained, "With hand trucks the weight was obvious to the hand trucker; with fork lifts it's in the shed before you know".

Thus, after 1958, the introduction of fork lift trucks allowed a previous balance of work flow between hold and shed to become uncoordinated at a time when coordination was more necessary than before. Prior to 1958 the hand truck operator, acting for the stowers as well as on his own behalf, was well positioned to communicate to holdsmen via the signaller if this proved necessary, and a balance in work flow could then easily be restored.

The situation of the stowers after 1958 is akin to that of the 'blind erratic' work groups investigated by Sayles. He found that groups performing homogeneous tasks, whose rate of work is determined outside their control, and who comprise men not of the highest status level in a plant, have a tendency to behave "erratically", i.e. to down tools and engage in "spontaneous" strikes - usually short-lived and on what management often term "unserious" pretexts (Sayles, 1958). Records of such stoppages in St. John's were not available, but all the managers with whom I discussed this matter were convinced that there had never been so many "walk offs" as followed the 1958 settlement, and they agreed that such stoppages began in the sheds.

Further evidence that post-1958 troubles may have been, at least in part, due to the abolition of hand trucks may be deduced from the Union Minutes. In the year prior to the introduction of fork lift trucks there were no charges recorded for hoisting overweight slings. In the year following their introduction five charges were preferred, and for the first time men found guilty were suspended from all work on the waterfront - mostly for periods of two weeks. Prior to 1958 all proven charges for this offence had attracted fines of no more than £10.

The evidence of the Minutes, therefore, is that the introduction of fork lift trucks can be seen in this context as an important factor contributing to the reduction of a perceived identity of interests between stowers and holdsmen. This, in its turn, has further served to limit the solidarity of their combined opposition to the foreman and, by limiting the relative autonomy of stowers, was responsible for an increase in their erratic behaviour.

It was to the period before 1958 that a very experienced member of the Executive, a hatch checker, referred when, in vividly expressing both the identity of gang members' interests and their solidarity, he said "Then, we were like 32 peas set in concrete. Now it's man against man".

The two cases taken from the Minutes of June 1953 and December 1954 illustrate controls over holdsmen that can be exercised by stowers through communication and by the use of formalised Union sanctions. Both these methods are particularly relevant in opposing a foreman's tendencies to speed

up and are applied in those situations where the hold crew act with the foreman and against the stowers. In some situations, however, the hold crew and the stowers overcome their structural schism and are enabled, therefore, to act together against the foreman. Again the conflict between foreman and men is frequently found to revolve about the foreman's need for 'reasonable' output and the men's strategy exploits a foreman's vulnerability to sanctions from senior management when reasonable output is not granted. Such deliberately restrictive action by a gang is called a "slow up". Its operation is now described as part of a series of sanctions which were operated against one 'Dog' Hale - a foreman on one of the larger wharfs.

4. The Case of 'Dog' Hale

Early in the fieldwork a foreman called 'Dog' Hale was considered by the men in his gang to be "riding them too hard". This term, applied by a holdman, covered a variety of separate dissatisfactions. Firstly Hale, normally well known for his habit of "barking" at the men (hence the nickname), was at this time apparently barking even louder than usual. He had also begun to "borrow" cigarettes to a disproportionate extent and had recently started to pressurise his hold crew to speed up. None of these events, however, considered singly or collectively, had precipitated action from his gang, though the men had become progressively more concerned and increasingly grumbled among themselves. Members of Hale's gang still did not respond even when he started to tighten up on lateness.

When, for instance, an established regular gang member is for any reason late for a shape up but it is known that he intends to be present, and his co-workers do not object to doing his work in the interim, then it is usual for the foreman to keep back the latecomer's disc until he arrives. Provided this doesn't occur too often such tolerance is accepted by both sides as part of an understood indulgency pattern (Gouldner, 1955). Though Hale withdrew this indulgency on several occasions his gang did no more than grumble.

What did succeed in activating the men, however, was when Hale began to exploit his control of hiring. Anything affecting the hiring of gang members is to them of central concern.

The final straw came during a slack period for Hale's gang when one of his regular holdssen shaped up for another foreman on a twelve hour boat and was not available for a "hobble" job - a short two hour boat - with Hale. Such an absence is normally regarded by all foreman with tolerance. When the absent holdssman, however, came to represent himself on Hale's next shape up he was left on the wharf, missed employment on that boat and accordingly lost twenty dollars.

Over drinks in their tavern after the first day's work on the new boat the men decided the time had come to apply the slow up. This was agreed to by all members of the gang, necessarily so since the cooperation of all members is essential to restrict output. The man who had been dropped played little part in the discussion, indeed much of the action was suggested by men who were stowers. As the discussion

continued, men from other gangs on the same premises came or were called over to the corner of the tavern where plans were being developed. At its peak this informal meeting numbered over thirty. The usual tables for four were pulled together and the "meeting", though under no formal chairmanship, was run by one of the stowers. At this time my rapport with the men was not satisfactory enough to allow me to attend, indeed suspicion over my role was at its height. Information was obtained at second hand from a stower who had been present, and was cross-checked some weeks later against reports of another stower who had also attended.

It was agreed that first of all the men should "slow up". Prior to this decision the grumbles of the men had been put to the foreman by the particular stower who later took charge of the tavern meeting. He had spoken out more than once as the foreman passed through the shed but had been ignored and, on one occasion, sworn at for his pains.

It was, therefore, as a result of this failure of the stower's early approaches that the slow up was brought into effect. The particular boat being worked was on a regular fortnightly run from Montreal to St. John's; its hatches were regularly filled with general cargo, and the time taken to unload the gang's particular hatch was always the same, being close to twenty hours. This period of twenty hours was known to all three parties who are particularly concerned with a slow up; the superintendent, the foreman and the gang. The gang decided to teach their foreman a lesson by slowing output to such an extent that they took

twenty-four hours to unload the hatch. This decision cost the employers 240 additional dollars in direct labour costs as well as the expense and inconvenience of keeping the boat in port an extra night. We shall now examine the mechanics of the slow up as they were applied against this and other foremen.

5. The Mechanics of the Slow Up

Slow ups and the threat of slow ups are the main sanction which longshoremen are able to apply against their foreman. A slow up, however, is a difficult operation for an outsider to observe - let alone to understand - since all of its constituent acts are relevant also to normal work. When the Hale episode occurred I was still regarded as persona non grata on the dock. It was not possible, therefore, to see the operation directed against him and, if it had, I would still have failed fully to understand its nature since at that early stage of fieldwork I had little experience of how gangs worked in normal circumstances⁽⁴⁾. The mechanics of slow up working, as these were operated against 'Dog' Hale and which are given below, were obtained by questioning several informants at a later stage of fieldwork and by cross checking the information received.

As it was explained to me, slow up working can usefully be compared to speed up working since both are largely determined by the same members of a gang.

I THE VESSEL CREW

1) The Holdsmen

We saw that the role of holdsmen is crucial to a speed up since they are at the start of the unloading process and it is they, therefore, who help to set the pace of work for the rest of the gang. Their position in the structure is similarly vital in the operation of a slow up, and the procedures they follow there can best be understood as the direct reverse of those applied in a speed up.

Holdsmen, as part of the vessel crew, therefore, have two ways of restricting their output. Firstly, instead of - as in a speed up - being concerned to load each sling with a greater rather than a lesser amount of cargo, holdsmen will in a slow up follow the reverse of this. They will, therefore, rigidly maintain the weight of sling loads at or below the level quoted in the agreement, and they are helped in this by a detailed knowledge of the weights of different goods. Where unusual cargo is handled, holdsmen will estimate its weight on the heavy side, and if the matter is disputed by the superintendent or foreman, will insist on its being weighed which even further delays the unloading process.

The second method of slowing up is also the converse of a speed up procedure. The holdsmen, winchmen and signaller combine to lift a lesser rather than a greater number of slings in a given period, and they do this, especially with the aid of the signaller, by a particular emphasis on safety precautions.

ii) Signallers

One of the signallers' main responsibilities is to protect holdsmen from accidents⁽⁵⁾. A signaller during slow up operations will punctiliously insist that holdsmen move back from the sling loading area before he gives the signal to lift or lower a sling. Since two slings are raised and lowered consecutively, this means that men have frequently to interrupt their loading on one sling whilst the second sling is moved into or out of the hold.

iii) Winchdrivers

Winchdrivers also have an important part to play in the operation of a slow up. It happens occasionally in normal working that the pulleys on a winch show a tendency to stick. When this happens a sling can suddenly jerk in mid lift and cargo fall back into the hatch or onto the deck or quay, with serious consequences for anyone in its path. When a pulley sticks a winchdriver will turn off his motors, stop his winch, find an oiling can and attempt to remedy the fault. A particularly sticky winch, as for instance might occur in a slow up, can easily involve several stoppages an hour.

II THE SHORE CREW

iv) The Skidsmen

The role of skidsmen in a slow up is very marginal indeed, and this must be regarded as a still further factor adding to their general social isolation from the rest of the

gang. Their contribution is marginal because the rate at which they receive cargo is determined, outside their control, by the vessel crew. On a similar basis, the rate at which cargo is taken from them is also determined beyond their control by the fork truck driver. Since their job comprises merely the lifting of cargo from sling to truck or merely unloosening slings if cargo is sling palletised⁽⁶⁾, their delaying potential is not very great.

v) Truck Drivers

The fork truck driver, in setting the pace of work for shed stowers, occupies an important role in the organisation of a slow up. He must set his pace to synchronise with that set by the vessel crew. If, for instance, a truck driver in a slow up is foolish enough to transmit cargo at speed from quay to shed, he will be seen at one or other end of his run to be idle for long periods. This idleness will invite criticism from the superintendent which will be directed not at the truck driver but at either the vessel crew at the beginning of his work process or the stowers at the end of it.

The truck driver, therefore, with his work sandwiched between both main cooperating sections of the gang, is visible to both vessel crew and to stowers, and during the working of a slow up he would invite the censure of both if he was observed as failing to cooperate with them.

vi) The Stowers

Since the job of stowers involves moving, sorting and stacking cargo in the shed they will, during a slow up,

elaborate the requirements of each task.

In moving cargo stowers will tend to move the same cargo to different sections of the shed, thus in fact increasing the amount of work they perform but to a reduced effect.

Much of their normal work involves sorting cargo for different consignees and here work lends itself to elaboration. Potatoes, for instance, arrive in St. John's in sacks individually labelled to each importer. Normally these labels are removed and the cargo treated as a homogeneous whole. Instead of an importer arriving to collect his consignment of, say, twenty individually labelled sacks, he will therefore normally be offered the first twenty sacks of a homogeneous pile of potatoes. In slow up working the stowers leave such labelling intact and make a separate pile of labelled potatoes for each importer.

Such action, besides being time consuming, takes up a considerable amount of valuable storage space which is of serious concern to management, since most of the wharfs in St. John's are normally heavily congested⁽⁷⁾.

Similar considerations lie behind the careful observance of stacking heights. When stacking cargo by hand in the sheds, stowers are normally lax about the height of such stacks, despite restrictions on height incorporated in the agreement⁽⁸⁾. During slow up working, rules governing the permitted heights of cargo stacks are carefully observed. The imposition of such a restriction, as well as being time consuming, also necessitates a greater use of scarce space.

vii) Hatch Checkers

A hatch checker appears to play very little part in the operation of slow ups; work in checking off cargo against documents is largely unaltered, though made more complicated, by the sometimes constant change of its location. Because his work lies at the end of the unloading process, the slow up may thus be said to have already taken place by the time his work comes to be done.

It is impossible to gauge the incidence of slow ups in the port of St. John's. Though men occasionally talk of how a slow up had 'disciplined' a particular foreman in the past, the impression I gained was that its actual performance is a rather rare occurrence. As far as I know there were only two such episodes during fieldwork - the Hale slow up and the series which resulted in the demotion of a foreman mentioned on page 5/2. It would appear that slow ups are an extremely adequate sanction in reserve rather than in practice, and that the threat, or at least the possibility, of a slow up is enough to provide men with their most valuable line of defence against a foreman.

The effectiveness of this practice on the industrial relations scene in St. John's is in part due to the vulnerable situation of the foreman. This practice, however, is of much wider application and its presence in St. John's, as elsewhere, can be attributed also to a number of other favouring circumstances.

Firstly, slow ups are often a feature of industrial relations in situations where the work process is controlled

by rules. Such rules, as noted by Knowles (1952, p.18), are a particular feature of transport industries. Here safety requirements need to be formalised, but punctilious attention cannot be maintained without often causing considerable disruption. The paradox exists, therefore, that for normal working such rules are never fully applied, and this was well understood by all the parties involved in St. John's.

Secondly, where legal restrictions apply against the more obvious expressions of industrial discontent, such as strikes, then going slow can be seen as a suitable alternative which has the advantage of legality (Knowles:1952, p.302).

This question of legality is perhaps of more concern to the Union Executive in St. John's - and especially to the President - than it is to the men, but it does mean that whereas Executive members will normally discourage an illegal walk off, they are instead more likely to encourage a slow up. A third reason favouring the institution of slow ups and closely allied to this question of legality is a consideration of the visibility of such actions. A slow up - unlike a walk off - lacks visibility and is, therefore, an operation of whose existence it is difficult to obtain proof. Accordingly, if management complain to a Union President that his men are slowing up he can safely deny all knowledge of the operation.

A further and not inconsiderable advantage a slow up provides for men paid on an hourly rate is that it is one of the few weapons of industrial warfare involving no loss of earnings. In fact, a slow up can actually increase earnings. The men involved in the Hale case, for instance, each earned

an extra $\frac{1}{8}$ by going slow.

6. The Dog Hale Case Continued : "Putting the Foreman in the Bullpen"

It happened that in the Hale case the foreman refused to amend his behaviour and, exceptionally therefore, the operation of a slow up proved ineffective. In this case Hale was reacting to pressures from above as well as below. He had been warned by management that his gang was unsatisfactory in behaviour (there had been a few occasions of drunkenness) as well as from the standpoint of low output. Because of this pressure he decided (or was perhaps instructed) to stand firm against the reactions of his men. In this he was backed by his superintendent who, anticipating from past experience that a slow up might be imminent, had suggested that if such action happened reasons for it would be understood and accepted.

The next stage in this affair occurred some days later on the gang's next boat. One of the stowers, arriving back from the mid-day break half-an-hour late, was observed entering the dock by Hale, who immediately suspended him from that boat.

That evening a second meeting was held, this time in the Union Hall. The men had previously discussed their problem with the Union Delegate, who agreed that they should "put the foreman in the bullpen", i.e. that they boycott the foreman's next shape-up. The Delegate, for his part, promised the support of outside men and of regular men from other wharves. This support was vital to the gang since it is no use putting their foreman in the bullpen if other members of

The Union offer themselves to be hired as substitutes.

It was left to the gang members themselves to obtain cooperation from members of other gangs on their own wharf and the meeting included members from all gangs. Support was readily forthcoming: by that evening all possible alternative labour had been warned of what was afoot.

The next day a boat arrived from Sydney, N.S., with three hatches to be unloaded. Three foremen climbed on deck to pick their men, but only two crowds shaped up. Dog Hale, the ostracised foreman, spent little time on deck. If he had not previously known what was in store, it immediately became apparent he was in the pen; he had no alternative but to return to the wharf, see the superintendent and explain that he was unable to hire a gang.

When the next boat arrived and Hale again took his stance on deck the men shaped up as previously. Hale heeded his warning and his relationship with the gang from then on was considered to have improved.

The superintendent concerned later acknowledged that if the men had kept their foreman in the bullpen for any length of time, management would have had no recourse but to demote him. As he put it, "If a foreman offends his men so much that no one will work with him, there is nothing we can do about it".

Bullpenning can be appreciated in one sense as a very effective tactic of bluff and certainly not, in this case at least, as being part of any campaign permanently to oust the foreman. It was effective since, in Newfoundland,

the spectre of unemployment follows the foreman almost as closely as it follows the men. Indeed, in some senses it can be said to be closer to the foreman because he has more to lose whilst, at the same time, his skills are as specific and, therefore, are as non-transferable as are theirs. On the other hand the bullpening of Hale, if persisted in to the point of his demotion, would have been likely further to reduce the security of the men in his gang. They would be in no preferred position relative to any replacement foreman who, it could be expected, would have his own set of obligations to fulfil. This is probably why bullpening a foreman is a rare occurrence and why the Hale case was the first that had been organised for several years⁽⁹⁾.

7. Limitations to the Gang's Power

Our discussion of the Hale case has emphasised the mechanisms available to members of gangs who desire to oppose their foremen. There are, however, situations where the cohesion normally found within (as opposed to between) the gang's two main sections it itself unable to be mobilised; the gang cannot, therefore, even begin to act in concert and a viable opposition cannot even start to be mounted locally. In such situations action can only come direct from central Union sources.

Such situations were a marked feature of industrial relations in 1959. By the agreement signed in 1958 the Union had been forced to accept a reduction in the size of its gangs. Prior to the stoppage each gang had contained 32 men. The

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agreement immediately reduced this number to 28, with further cuts scheduled until gangs were eventually to contain only 21 men.

The foremen in this situation, faced with cuts they alone were to effect and in the absence of a laid down redundancy procedure⁽¹⁰⁾, were able to exploit the situation in two ways. The first was to give no warning before the scheduled dates arrived of which men they proposed to drop. As each date approached on which a cut was to be effected, therefore, insecurity amongst the men became enhanced. This was particularly the case among stowers, since it was known that from their ranks the majority of cuts would be made. As a result of this policy all stowers in all gangs suffered an enhanced insecurity.

The foremen's second method of exploiting cut backs in gang size occurred after the scheduled dates had been reached. Instead of making a once-and-for-all reduction, foremen then started a practice of alternating members of their stowing crews so that men dropped from one boat were rehired on the next.

By these two methods, therefore, foremen were able to achieve control over the ability of their gangs to act in unison against them. No man in such an uncertain situation was likely to initiate tactics of opposition. If he did so he was likely to be victimised. And no man, if this were to happen, could guarantee the support of his workmates as he would have been able to do prior to the reduction in gang size. The situation of regular gang members, therefore, and particularly that of the stowers, lay in marked contrast to the

solidarity of pre lockout days to which the already quoted remark refers: "then we were like 32 peas set in concrete...".

As a result of this special circumstance permitting unusual exploitation of their powers to hire and fire, the foremen were able to stop gang members coalescing in opposition to their control: they were not, however, able to reduce the influence of central Union organisation. The Union Executive, after a period of some months in which stowers were 'rotated', called a meeting⁽¹¹⁾ of all foremen and warned them, as members of the Union, of the possibility of Union discipline if they persisted in their policy. The policy of rotation thereafter ceased.

Though the Union was thus able to remove the foremen's second exploitive strategy, it still left the first untouched. This allowed foremen to choose which men were to be moved out of their gangs on each scheduled cut, and gave no warning before such a reduction of which men would be involved. The work stoppage that arose in 1964 was in part due to the bitterness which followed the aftermath of the 1958 lockout and in part to the persisting lack of a redundancy agreement which once more led to insecurity among the Union's stowers. Men again knew that a reduction was imminent but, as before, were uncertain which men were to be involved. This uncertainty again enhanced the insecurity of all stowers and was particularly serious at that time since five men were due to be dropped from each gang.

8. Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned to delineate the strategies of opposition to foremen by members of their gangs. We saw that the gang is differentially concerned about an acceptable level of output but is united on matters of hiring - that is, on matters which affect the basis of a gang's constituency and of how this is determined.

When questions of output are in dispute with a foreman the basic hold/shed dichotomy is likely to persist and efforts at control by stowers then takes the form of persuasion or threats. These involve pressuring holdsmen and sometimes foremen directly, to limit the amount of cargo hoisted in a given period. If this is unsuccessful, then stowers must employ central union sanctions in the form of disciplinary charges for the hoisting of overweight slings.

The second strategy, the slow up, is employed only when the stowers concern over their relationship with the foreman is also shared by their holdsmen. Such action requires the gang's two main divisions to submerge their differences since a slow up demands gang-wide cooperation. Slow ups, therefore, are likely responses to matters which directly threaten the autonomy of the gang - particularly disputes over hiring - which directly affect the gang's constituency. A slow up, or even the threat of a slow up, is the most common strategy employed against a foreman because among other reasons previously discussed, all the resources necessary are found within the gang itself and no outside support is required.

The third and most extreme strategy - putting their

foreman "in the bullpen" - is a relatively difficult operation to mount. It requires mobilising support from outside as well as inside the gang. Some of this it is able to obtain through its own resources, i.e. in the Hale case cooperation of other gang members on the same wharf was obtained at the gang's tavern and Union Hall meetings. Other support, however, is necessary from outside the wharf, and it is here that the essential services of the central Union organisation in the person of the Union Delegate is required. If the Delegate will not warn other Union members to absent themselves, or if they ignore this warning, or if he refuses to countenance a boycott, then putting a foreman in the bullpen will prove ineffective.

It is this mutual dependence of gang members on these wider buttresses of support that knits together the gangs on a particular wharf and which links the wharves together in their turn, to form the wider collectivity which is the Union.

Footnotes to Chapter 5

- (1) "All orders to the men must be issued through their gang foremen who in turn will be subject to orders from the Company Superintendent, or his representative, except in the case of special work where a Superintendent may give orders". 1962 Working Agreement, Rule 28(1) (a).
- (2) The 1962 Working Agreement, Rule 23 limits the hoist of general cargo to a weight of 1600 lbs. Prior to 1958 the limit had been 1200 lbs.

- (3) Prior to 1958 the gang included two signallers. This was reduced to one after the Union's defeat in the 1958 strike/lockout. They are often referred to as 'deckmen'.
- (4) For a journalist's account of go slow working in the London docks see the Daily Telegraph, July 13, 1945.
- (5) Safety and Health in Dock Work, paras. 417 and 401.
- (6) Where the cargo is loaded on special pallets that contain hooks at each of their corners. Such pallets when linked to the ship's gear are used in lieu of slings.
- (7) Most of St. John's dock facilities, with the notable exception of the Government financed Finger Pier opened in 1963, are in virtually the same condition as invited the criticism of the Warner Report in 1942:

'If the dock-side premises were publicly owned a first class dock Engineer would have been called in long ago and the Port gradually built up in accordance with a well considered plan.'

'We have noticed that many of the existing sheds are cramped in height and that the large number of pillars supporting the roofs and upper floors makes trucking, sorting, piling and delivery of cargo both difficult and expensive. Even with the existing sheds the provision of steel girders might considerably reduce the number of supports, but this is an engineering problem, and requires expert opinion.'

If private enterprise is to continue to own and manage the wharves proper facilities should be provided for dealing with cargo. A great point has been made in evidence that trade is leaving St. John's. This movement will doubtless increase and new traffic may use other Newfoundland ports if modernisation of the sheds and wharves and their proper maintenance are not taken in hand.'

(Newfoundland Government, Settlement of Trade Dispute Board appointed under the Defence (Control and Conditions of Employment and Disputes Settlement) Regulations, 1941, for the settlement of a dispute between the Employers' Association and the Longshoremen's Protective Union of St. John's. St. John's, Nfld, 1942, pp. 35 and 36.)

- (8) 1962 Working Agreement, p. 16, para 30.
- (9) In this, men are seen to follow 'the Jim Strategy': "and always keep a-hold of nurse for fear of finding something worse". (Belloc, 1939).

- (10) It may appear surprising at first sight that the Union should have made no attempt to obtain a procedural agreement governing priorities in redundancy. One executive member I discussed this matter with said that "the executive would have been cut to pieces by the body - nobody thinks that they should go." Irrespective of the validity of this argument, the effect of it was that by abnegating any militant role, the executive were thus able to focus antagonism against the foremen whose job it was to effect the cutbacks.
- (11) No direct record of this meeting occurs in the Minutes.

CHAPTER 6THE ORGANISATION OF PILFERAGE1. Introduction : Some Preliminary Questions2. The Amount of Theft3. Four Cases of Theft:

Case I	Men's Suits
Case II	Transistor Radios
Case III	Whisky
Case IV	Foodstuffs

4. The System of Pilferage5. Working the Value of the Boat : The Morality and Regulation of Pilferage

CHAPTER 6THE ORGANISATION OF PILFERAGE1. Introduction

We have examined the longshore work gang from a number of standpoints. Starting with an account of the gang's socio-technical organisation involved in "normal" working, we then considered the ordering of relationships involved in operating a variety of strategies of opposition to foremen. There is yet a further range of activities: that concerned with the organisation necessary for pilfering cargo and for its distribution. It will be demonstrated how pilferage, as an institutionalised social activity, supplies yet one more way by which the ordering of social relationship may vary while the basic technical system remains unaltered.

Some Preliminary Questions:

Answers to the questions of what is stolen, how it is stolen, who steals and the method of disposal of pilfered items are of course not easy to determine. Certainly, St. John's people who are not connected with the waterfront often have a stereotyped view of longshoremen as thieves on something like a grand scale. During my stay in St. John's I mixed not only with workers on the waterfront but with many members of the importing and distributing middle class of the city. Many of these people had tales to tell of cargoes being stolen.

Some believed that theft was on a large scale and, furthermore, was organised. That is, they postulated the existence of a system by which cargo was obtained and redistributed for profit. Others suggested that all longshoremen were criminals who took whatever they could when they could. When it was known that I was to work in the dock, for instance, I was warned on several occasions never to take my jacket off, always to watch my pockets and never to lend money to longshoremen. In the event, none of these warnings proved in the slightest degree justified.

Though these were attitudes based on little contact with longshoremen, they did prove useful in setting up initial questions for enquiry. These, and other questions it is hoped this chapter will make some attempt to answer, can be regarded as of two types. Firstly, there are questions concerned with the organisation of pilferage; of how techniques and methods of obtaining and distributing pilfered cargo involve an articulation of technical tasks and of skills that are directed to this end.

A second set of questions is concerned with longshoremen's attitudes to theft, and how these are differentially applied to different kinds of cargo. It aims to understand their scheme of morality and the system of values by which longshoremen justify what, to outsiders, might appear a permissive attitude in some directions and a rigid non-compromising one in others: it is, therefore, concerned to show how longshoremen redefine theft in terms of their own value structure.

Thus we have two sets of questions, the answers to which will, it is hoped, throw some light on a hardly understood phenomenon. Pilferage affects not only St. John's but also other ports - and not only ports but other organisations. It appears to occur, in fact, wherever workmen (including management) handle goods or materials, the use of which is not specific to the working situation⁽¹⁾.

2. The Amount of Theft

It must be understood how impossible it is to give even a tentative figure about quantities of cargo stolen in the port of St. John's. In the first place, insurance statistics do not differentiate between goods stolen and goods damaged in transit. Secondly, cargoes can be interfered with in transit by members of ships' crews, and finally, it is not possible to isolate either theft or damage as originating at any one port. Cargoes unloaded in St. John's may, for instance, have been loaded or been in transit through Liverpool, Montreal or Halifax; they may well be interfered with at any of these points prior to a ship's arrival in St. John's. Something of this nature occurred in 1963. A cargo of shoes while being unloaded from The Horse Boat - as the regular Liverpool to St. John's run is still called - was observed to have been interfered with. It was found that some shoes had been removed and replaced with old discarded pairs. The men, highly indignant at this discovery, were quick to point out that early detection had saved them from blame on this occasion but such discovery was

largely fortuitous. They emphasised that if this interference had remained undetected they would certainly have been blamed by the consignees.

It can be appreciated, therefore, how difficult it is quantitatively to rate pilferage in St. John's comparatively with that in other ports. It was, however, possible to ask men with experience of other ports how they would comparatively rate the port in this matter of pilferage. To this end the captains of twelve vessels on regular runs to St. John's were asked how they thought the port compared. Eight of them believed the rate of theft in St. John's to be much higher than in other ports of their experience, whilst four thought the theft rate no lower but did not necessarily think it higher than in other ports.

Several captains pointed to certain features about St. John's which they believed made theft of cargo easier there than elsewhere. The most common reference was to a general absence of gates or checkpoints in the port. This means that many people besides longshoremen have free access and egress to the wharves and sheds. Truckers drive on to wharves to collect cargo without restriction, and members of the public expecting consignments similarly drive straight into the dock to collect their goods. The second obvious difference is the nature of much of the port's cargo. Since Newfoundland has little manufacturing industry of its own, nearly everything found in the shops has to be imported. Much of this General Cargo, especially canned and bottled food, is packed only in light cardboard containers which, it was

well acknowledged, amount almost to an open invitation to pilferage. There was general agreement that the lack of strong containers allows damage, which is often the first step to pilferage. Combined with a lack of adequately policed gates, the predominance of this type of cargo could, it was thought, contribute to a higher than average rate of pilferage. Even well packed cargo is hardly safeguarded, in the absence of gates and checkpoints. One longshoreman, for instance, quite drunk, was found by a policeman half a mile from the dock rolling home a barrel of salt beef.

An official of one wharf stated that the theft and damage rate in nine terminals which his company operated throughout the Canadian mainland amounted to an average of 30 cents per ton of general cargo unloaded. The comparative figure in St. John's was, he said, over eight times as high and equal to \$2.50 per unloaded ton.

It is certainly true that many longshoremen are sensitive about their reputation as thieves held in the wider society of St. John's. Especially during the early part of my stay, when I was tactless enough to raise this question, they were quick to point out the special features of the port which they said tended to give them an unjust reputation. They emphasised the openness of the wharves, the special nature of general cargo, the organisational

... particularly, the easy access to cargo by thieves and members of the public who were all blamed for their activities when they asserted,

they would more readily discuss pilferage and even on occasion boast a little about their exploits. But it still remains impossible to give answers to the question of how much cargo is taken by longshoremen or categorically to affirm that more is taken in St. John's than elsewhere. Certainly there is no reason to believe that the longshoremen of St. John's are in any sense unique as regards pilferage or that the details to be discussed cannot be duplicated in almost every other similar port in the world.

3. Four Cases of Theft

It must first be made clear that I was not able to observe any actual examples of theft taking place in the dock. Details of instances were obtained initially from management or from traders who had suffered loss in their consignments. Later in the fieldwork, material was obtained from longshoremen themselves, but again in the absence of direct observation. With all such sources, however, it was possible to go back to several informants and to cross-check the material received.

Case I : Men's Suits

I first heard from the manager of one wharf that a cargo of men's suits imported from the mainland had been broken into and some of them pilfered. In checking with the trader to whom this consignment was addressed, I found that about twenty suits out of a consignment of a hundred had disappeared between despatch in Montreal and arrival in

St. John's. With this background I then went to some of my informants who worked on the wharf concerned.

The sequence of events was fairly clear and cross-checking with several informants confirmed what had happened. A hatch checker had been alerted by details on his bills of lading as to the contents of the crates and messages had passed from shed to vessel crew to warn them of the 'good pickings' to be expected from these specified crates. These were then loaded by the hold crew so that two of them would fall if the winch were jerked. At an appropriate moment, as the sling was poised over the quay, the signaller gave an all clear sign to the winchman. The winchman adjusted his levers, the winch jerked and the boxes fell. They were only slightly damaged as a result of their fall, but this was sufficient to ease the job of gaining access to their contents.

Following normal procedure, the crates were then moved by fork lift truck to the shed for attention of the stowers. The shed is scarcely a safe place for pilferage since the superintendent of the wharf or even the company manager may make an appearance. Superintendents, in particular, frequently walk round the sheds to assure themselves that work is proceeding and, presumably, also to restrict pilferage. In this shed (as in several others) a further hazard to stowers is provided by the situation of the superintendent's office. This is customarily set high in the roof and has large glass windows so that the superintendent, sitting at his desk, has an overview of operations throughout the shed.

First of all, then, it is necessary to block off this view of what is going on in the sorting and unloading area.

In this instance, much of the other cargo unloaded with the suits was bulky and packed in large cases. The fork lift driver stacked this cargo to block off the superintendent's line of vision so that he could not see the loading area from his office. At the same time the driver also built up some others of the packing cases to form a hollow square. This enclosure then served as a changing room. Thus equipped, men were able to choose their suits at leisure, trying on different ones for size and, at the same time, be secure from the prying eyes of the superintendent in the roof.

Throughout the day holdmen, signaller and winchmen left the vessel and made their way individually to "the changing room". Stovers, as they went about their normal job, kept a wary eye open for authority, but the procedure went unobserved. This cargo was removed from the dock in the usual way: secreted in the clothing of men who took the goods home at the end of the day. Men are extremely skilful in this matter. I once walked with a man a quarter of a mile through busy streets to his home. Once inside the door he pulled out bottle after bottle of whisky until there were six bottles on the kitchen table.

The following day the hatch checker reported that two crates had arrived in a damaged condition, but by this time the missing suits had already been moved and were almost impossible to trace. It was not possible, therefore, to localise this case of pilferage to the port of St. John's:

there was no evidence to prove that the cases could not have been opened in Montreal or other ports on the vessel's route. It has already been pointed out that cargo often arrives at St. John's that has been interfered with prior to its arrival, and often longshoremen in the port are blamed for pilferage they know has been accomplished elsewhere.

In this case, though the cooperation of vessel crew, stowers and fork lift driver were all necessary to the successful carrying through of the operation, actual pilferage was effected in the shed. Both management and men, however, are of the view that most pilferage, as in the following case, occurs whilst cargo is still in the hold.

Case II : Transistor Radios

This case, involving a cargo of radios from Germany, came to notice when discussing the general question of pilferage with one of the superintendents. "Oh yes - they'll steal anything. They're the worst thieves in the world", he said. "Only last week a cargo of radios en route to Montreal was completely cleared out." I asked how he was so sure they'd been taken in St. John's. He insisted he was sure but was hesitant to say why. The account, as obtained from informants, was as follows:

The holdmen had noticed several cases of radios lying behind other cargo they were unloading. With typical teutonic efficiency the forwarders had marked in English on the outside of their cases the name of the radios, a full description, including the fact that they were portable (sic) and the

quantity contained in each package. In a situation like this, however, holdsmen cannot just break into a package, since it is frequently the case that a member of the ship's crew will be pacing the deck and occasionally peering into the hold. He is there specifically to restrict pilferage. Usually, this lookout is a ship's officer; the job often falling to the Mate or one of his deputies, though sometimes, if a cargo is not particularly valuable or is not easily pilfered, it may be delegated to a more junior officer. In this case, the man keeping an eye on men in the hold was the ship's Mate.

The threat to security posed by the ship's officer is a serious one, though holdsmen can stay out of his line of vision if they know where he is positioned. On this occasion, as in other cases where holdsmen are involved, their insecurity was reduced by the signaller. His "normal" job, it will be recalled, involves in part the passing of signals to the winchmen. By quick and deft movements of his hands, he tells the winchmen by how much to raise, lower and move the slings. To do this, he must stand on the ship's deck on the shore-side of the vessel. He is thus in a perfect position not only to carry out his normal signalling role but also to keep an eye on the ship's officer who, in his turn, is keeping observation on the hold crew. A signaller's arm movements are not only used, therefore, to coordinate the work of winch, hold and skidsmen, but in contribution to the system of pilferage they also serve to warn men in the hold below of the activities of the ship's officer above them. So rapid and well understood can be these signals that I was never able to recognise or to

isolate them.

Though these cases were opened by holdsmen, their allocation was divided amongst all sections of the gang, though I neglected to find out if this included the normally isolated skidsmen. My main informant, a stower, had two radios including one which he sold. Not all the gang participated, since apparently several were scared of taking such valuable items (these radios retailed for over \$150 each). The radios were removed from the dock under men's coats.

Except for the high value of the items involved this case would appear more typical of pilferage in St. John's than the previous case in that its activity was largely restricted to the vessel crew. The vessel crew's "leavings" were then made available to stowers and, as this was a cargo in transit, there would presumably have been no need for cooperation from the hatch checker.

I neglected to find out how the packaging had been disposed of in this case, as it must have been since "the cargo had been completely cleared out". The usual method is for it to be broken up, find its way into the harbour, be carried out of the docks, or to end up minus identifying markings amongst the normal and considerable rubbish of the shed.

Case III : Whisky

One British ship's captain, with a cargo of coal from Sydney, Nova Scotia, recounted what had happened on a previous trip whilst observing the unloading of a cargo of whisky.

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As stated previously, the overseeing of men in the hold is normally the duty of the mate. In situations, however, where cargo is particularly likely to be pilfered, especially where a high value consumption item such as whisky is involved, for which there is an almost insatiable demand, the Captain himself might oversee the unloading. On this occasion, as the Captain was leaning over the hatch he saw that the crates were not placed quite securely on the sling. As they were hoisted the sling wobbled and one fell back into the hold, landing on a corner. This was sufficient to break a couple of bottles which leaked their precious liquid into the hold. "Almost before the damned crate was down they were there with cups and cans and what have you", he stated. "I was ready for it, you see. I knew what was going to happen. As soon as it fell, I shouted to them to stand back and made them wait till it had run away. They were pretty angry at that and wanted to know why I'd wasted the stuff - so I told them, 'because I don't want any more cases falling - alright?' They all laughed at that. Yes - you have a hard job with thieving. Mind you, it's not even safe to do this - they can be bloody minded. Pilfering is found in any port, but it is worse here in my experience than anywhere else in N. America. It's petty though - not organised on a large scale."

Such an operation's apparent casualness, as the Captain was well aware, requires practised cooperation of winchmen, hold crew and signaller. Firstly, the hold pair must load the crate onto the sling with great care so that

it falls neither too early nor too late. Secondly, the signaller must be well aware of what has been arranged so he can pass requisite signals to the winchmen to treat this sling load rather differently than usual. Finally, the winchman, on whose particular expertise this operation largely depends, must know exactly when to shift his gears so that, with sound science and some elegance, he can cause the crate's demise.

The Captain continued that a friend of his, also a ship's Captain employed by the same company, had some years previously, caught a man in St. John's red-handed and had called the police. The men "for devilment" stole a lot more. "Never again", he swore, "let the insurance pay up." The Captain said that his company had stopped shipping general cargo to St. John's and now confines its operations to coal - directly because of this type of pilferage.

Case IV : Foodstuffs

Rather than having a specific example in mind, we now come to consider pilferage of a general category of goods, often taken in relatively small amounts. These comprise foodstuffs, particularly those considered luxuries and which tend, therefore, to vary with the tastes of each individual and of his family.

Access to foodstuffs is particularly easy since their packaging is minimal - they usually arrive in single thickness cardboard containers and often these become damaged

in the normal course of a cargo's discharge.

A common foodstuff favoured by the men is sprouts which are imported from the mainland and, being expensive, are considered something of a delicacy by longshoremen in St. John's. When a cargo of sprouts arrives, it is considered usual by several of the men to fill a pocket or two. Men in the hold might also "take care" of the interests of winchmen or signaller in this regard, and stowers might also similarly "take care" of a truck driver.

Some men, however, have more esoteric tastes. One man had a taste for anchovies, also considered a luxury good, being regarded as a middle-class treat. When this man, a stower, handled cargo including anchovies he would pocket two or three tins for the table. He had a friend, also a stower in another gang on the same wharf, who shared a similar taste. When either gang handled anchovies each stower made sure that his friend was also catered for. Men similarly take special foods for their wives. They will make an especial attempt to do so, it was explained to me, on occasions when liquor is also taken from the dock. Longshore women, it appears, are generally anti liquor and it seems that anchovies or sprouts are used on these occasions to placate them for the heavy drinking of their menfolk that is likely to follow 'good liquor pickings'.

4. The System of Pilferage

It is apparent from the cases discussed that a system for the operation of pilferage does indeed exist, if by system here we mean a set of inter-connected parts which are organised together to perform a particular job, and with the boundary to the system being largely congruent to the work gang. To state that pilferage operates within a system is not at all the same thing, however, as suggesting that pilferage in the port of St. John's is facilitated as an aspect of organised crime in the city. For one thing, pilferage appears to be random in that advance planning has little place in its organisation; secondly, its distribution is not usually for profit; and thirdly, it provides a secondary source of resources restricted to men whose primary source of income is from longshoring⁽²⁾.

To understand the social relationships involved in the system of pilferage, we must recognise that two complementary facilities need to be exploited for theft to occur. These two facilities are (with one exception to be discussed below) not found together in the same work role. The key to understanding how the system operates lies in observing not only that these facilities are complementary but also in a perception of how they work in alliance. They may be termed facilities of access and support. (See Chart 1.)

When we examine workroles of men in the longshore gang we find the technical system imposing a two-fold specialisation which has a crucial effect on the way pilfering is organised. Some men spend their day actually handling cargo:

CHART 1

<u>WORK ROLE</u>	<u>PILFERAGE FUNCTION</u>		
	<u>ACCESS</u>	<u>SUPPORT</u>	
Moldsmen	+	-	} Vessel Crew
Winchdrivers	-	+	
Signaller	-	+	
Skidemen	-	-	Special case Isolates
Fork Lift Driver	-	+	} Shed Crew
Stowers	+	-	
Hatch Checker	+	+	Special case.

The division of labour in the system of pilferage as organised in the port of St. John's. Two clear groups emerge which follow the technical organisation of the work gang. Extremes which the system reveal are found with the skidemen (--) and the hatch checker (++).

Foremen do not as a rule participate in pilferage.

these men who have access to cargo are holdswen, skidswen, stowers and the checker. Other men, though involved in the process of moving cargo from ship to shed, do not actually handle goods but instead provide support for men who do in fact handle and have access to cargo. Thus, the winchmen, signaller and fork truck driver perform services with or without machinery though each may pass long periods without ever actually touching a crate.

If men with access to cargo had direct and untrammelled opportunities to procure goods, then dependencies within the gang would be very different from what is in fact found. Access, as we have seen, however, is limited. Cargoes often arrive in cases that are difficult to open; men in the shed are subject to prying eyes of superiors; men in the hold must beware of ship's officers; documents must be squared and evidence of packaging disposed of if 'access men' are to be successful pilferers. All these hazards to effective theft can only be overcome by use of the second facility: support.

It was shown that for holdswen to gain access to the contents of crates involves support of winchmen and signaller. It can be extremely dangerous for a winchman to drop a crate from a sling onto the quay, the deck or into the hold without the sure guide of the signaller, and if this happened serious accidents would almost certainly occur. The signaller is also revealed as vital to the holdswen's security by being in a position where he can warn them of the presence of ship's officers.

Within the shed, facility of support for access men,

who are stowers, comes from the fork driver and the hatch checker. The fork driver's support, as we saw, is necessary to the stowers' access because he can move cargo (a) to where it may be more readily interfered with, and (b) to provide a screen against outsiders' eyes.

Hatch checkers, as the chart shows, occupy a distinctive place in the system by which pilferage is organized. Theirs is the only role to combine both facilities of access and support (++). Their normal work involves direct physical handling of cargo which thereby grants them access, and their support is necessary to others on two grounds. Firstly, a checker's support is necessary to square documents; secondly, being skilled at "knowing the marks" (i.e. at recognising contents of a box from markings on its outside) and through receipt of Bills of Lading, he is in a strong position to suggest the most fruitful crates or packages to open.

We see from the chart, therefore, that nearly all gang members are enmeshed in a system of mutual dependencies made necessary by the technical and safety limitations which act against open access to cargo. Two work positions, however, are entirely excluded from this system of dependencies: these are occupied by the skidsmen, who lack access to cargo and who cannot grant support (--). Their access is extremely limited because their work takes place in the open on the quayside and, therefore, within sight of any passing member of the hierarchy. Furthermore, their handling of any crate or package is only transitory as they unload it from sling to

fork truck; it usually needs time to delve into a crate or to wrench off a lid in order to get at the contents. Not only is their access limited, but skidsmen are in no position to supply support to other gang members. The implications of the skidsman's absence of function in this total system of dependencies overflows the work situation and affects their non-work relationships. Their isolation here is, therefore, to be seen as only one aspect of their more general isolation from the social life of the gang.

Convictions for pilferage in the port of St. John's are extremely rare and there were no cases during the period of field work or in the immediate past. Managers, in discussion, always insist that the lack of convictions was, as one stated, because "longshoremen always stick together. You can never get one longshoreman to testify against another." Managers and superintendents also realize that they are in little position to institute proceedings. Even if they were to catch a man red-handed their testimony would involve retaliatory actions by the men which would make work relations even more difficult than usual. Managers often mentioned that men had once walked off a boat because 'watchers' were placed in the hold to supervise the unloading of whisky. Convictions, where they have occurred, have, therefore, usually been instituted by men who are largely outside the waterfront system of relationships; they have usually been due to the alertness of ships' officers rather than to any measures of management.

When longshoremen talk of relationships within the gang and indeed within the Union generally, they frequently

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emphasise the dependence and mutual trust that exists between them. It is, of course, scarcely surprising that trust should be highly valued: where activity occurs that is illegal the necessity for absolute confidence in the dependability of one's colleagues is of crucial importance. When talking of the induction of new gang members, one informant recounted the case of a Salvationist who had moved into his gang before the war. Because he refused to take cargo men were suspicious of him and reluctant to confirm him to membership. About this time police enquiries were started into the theft of a valuable cargo and they 'grilled' the new member over a period of three months. "All that time he didn't give anything away" said my informant. "He was really firm in the gang after that." On the other hand, such trust is not always found and its negation is also used to justify behaviour and to maintain standards. One winchman volunteered the information that a contender for Union office would never get elected. He was alleged to have split to the police in a dock theft scandal some 25 years before (He did indeed come bottom of the poll.)

Not only does pilferage, since it is illegal, serve to unite gang members against the possibility of outside sanctions, but its technical organisation also acts to solidify gang membership. This arises firstly because the dock work gang is technically organised so that all necessary access and support functions are found within its own ranks. Unlike the practice of bullpenning a foreman which, as we saw, requires the buttress of extra gang support, the practice of pilferage is self-contained and largely exclusive to the gang.

Secondly, because access and support functions are differentially allocated and dispersed between a gang's work roles we find that no one individual can exert a monopoly over either feature. This means not only that no individual can easily act in his own interests at the expense of the gang, but also that the gang can readily operate controls against any individual who tries to so act; the gang, therefore, emerges as enjoying what has been termed "responsible autonomy"⁽³⁾ in pilferage. The technical basis of pilferage can thus be understood as contributing to an inhibition of individual interests within a gang and serves instead to emphasise the primacy of collective and equilibrarian sentiments among its members. These are self selected, autonomous as regards supervision and leadership and able as a group to offer collective protection to members against external hostility.

Pilferage, therefore, helps to bind members of gangs into tight exclusive groups - explicitly considered here as socio technical systems. But the institutionalisation of pilferage also affects relationships beyond the gang and emphasises the essential openness of such systems. This is particularly manifest as an extension of alliances between gangs, derived in part from the policy of managements who, when they have secured a successful conviction, also suspend the culprit for six months from all work on that wharf.

How such alliances are forged was described by a stower, Alan MacHale, who had a conviction of some years standing for being found in possession of stolen groceries taken from the dock. He had been fined in the magistrates'

court and the company then suspended him for six months from all hirings on their wharf. This extra-legal penalty could have reduced Alan to a position worse than any outside man since they at least can attend all the shape ups on each wharf. Instead of a decline during this period, Alan stated that his earnings had actually increased. "In those six months I was never out of a job. You see, it could have happened to anyone. Who knows when one of them might get caught and need a job on X's (his home) wharf?"

5. "Working the Value of the Boat" : the Morality and Regulation of Pilferage

When examination is made of different cargoes and of attitudes taken to them, we find that most longshoremen make a sharp distinction between cargo it is permissible to steal and that which should remain untouched. Normally all consumer goods are suitable for pilferage whereas taking personal baggage is, on the other hand, considered despicable. This distinction is seen and expressed in terms of insurance liability covering cargo addressed to impersonal firms on the one hand, and personal property belonging to individuals on the other. This two-fold distinction is well displayed in the following representative quotations. One longshoremen, when justifying his dislike of another gang worker, remarked: "He'd take anything - he's even taken baggage - he's nothing more than a thief"⁽⁴⁾. Another, in discussing pilferage of general cargo, commented: "I can't understand what they make all the fuss about. It's all insured and nobody's heard of

an insurance company going broke. In any case, they've all made millions out of this port and it's us who do the work."

When the first speaker used the word 'thief' he limited the definition to cover a narrower range of behaviour than usually understood by the term. Pilferage of cargo other than baggage is, according to this view and by implication, regarded as 'non-theft'. The second quotation makes this explicit and pilferage emerges here as a morally justified addition to wages; indeed, as an entitlement due from exploiting employers⁽⁵⁾.

Longshoremen have a phrase to describe the process of obtaining this entitlement - they call it "working the value of the boat". Thus, if a boat is expected to provide ten hours work at two dollars an hour, then the boat is 'good for' twenty dollars in wages. "Working the value of the boat" in this case would also, however, mean obtaining cargo up to but no more than an estimated value of twenty dollars.

The application of this concept can be seen to fulfil a number of functions. Firstly, it tends to institutionalise pilferage - to grant it the status of a recognised and regularly occurring activity and, therefore, gives it some degree of acceptance as a normal part of life. The concept serves also, however, to express the idea of a level of achievement: to suggest a point of aspiration. To say of a man, "he always works the value of a boat" is a compliment; a confirmation of his independence and of his ability to outwit the employers⁽⁶⁾.

A third function served by working the value of the

boat is the provision of a formula which fixes an unequivocal limit beyond which pilferage, no longer perceived as laudatory, is instead seen as a danger to one's workmates. If men go above the value of the boat it is thought they are likely to attract managerial and possibly police intervention. Such behaviour, if persisted in, can easily involve a man in sanctions applied by management or even by his co-workers. On one occasion a longshoreman, known to have a car off the dock stacked with cargo, returned to find it broken into and the contents completely cleared. It was well understood that this had been accomplished by his workmates. Account of this action was told and retold with some hilarity throughout the waterfront: the general view was it served the victim right, he was known to be greedy and such behaviour was likely to prove a danger to all longshoremen involved in handling the same cargo. This operation of an upper limit, therefore, can also be understood as allowing men to operate within the limits of certainty: men know and can forecast managerial reactions to pilferage only when it is kept to known and specified limits. This strongly suggests that management are also, in a very real sense, conspirators with the men; they in effect collude in accepting as part of an indulgency pattern⁽⁷⁾ a specific level of pilferage. It would be interesting to speculate on the extent of such collusion in industries other than dockwork and to assess the factors permitting variable levels of pilferage in different milieus.

A final function served by the operation of this upper limit to pilferage is its retention, thereby, within the

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sphere of the moral and thus of the justified. If a man takes more than the value of the boat, he is taking more than his moral entitlement and this alters the nature of his action. Though to an outsider the difference between working below or over the value of a boat might well appear only one of degree, to a longshoreman the difference is essentially qualitative. Up to an agreed level pilfered cargo is seen as a moral entitlement: beyond this, additional pilferage is theft. Thus, when a gang sets levels of aspiration and operates controls to limit pilferage, it is acting not only from a standpoint of economic rationality but also, and this is a paradox not readily appreciated off the waterfront, from a basis firmly set in the prevailing morality.

Pilfering of cargo is, therefore, seen to be subject to controls derived from and exercised by the gang in the same way and for many of the same reasons as it derives and exercises control over legitimate work. It is convenient, therefore, to treat these two aspects of work controls within a similar frame of reference - to view them indeed as they are viewed by longshoremen.

Seen in this light a high level of pilferage, just as a high level of work restriction, can be understood as obtainable only at the expense of a structure of values concerning the moral worth of work supplied in relation to benefits owed. But activities are seen to require regulation not only on moral grounds, however, but also since unanticipated managerial reactions are likely to result from the practice of excess. Both activities, therefore, are seen to be

battressed by rules of what is considered reasonable⁽⁸⁾; they are in a word institutionalised; uncertainty is thereby made minimal and the dangerous element in both practices effectively diffused.

Whereas effects of work restriction are hardly evident off the waterfront, effects of pilferage intrude, and often dramatically so, into the wider society of St. John's. When this happens, no matter how well justified and regulated it may be within the longshore milieu, and irrespective of its acceptability to management, pilferage is, off the waterfront, unequivocally perceived as theft. This must remain, therefore, one of the main reasons why longshoremen feel, and indeed are, socially isolated from the wider society in which they live and work.

Footnotes to Chapter 6:

- (1) Though there has been a considerable amount of journalism on this topic there has been little sociological study. Indeed, academic authors largely appear to have ignored the phenomenon even when knowledge of it could hardly have been avoided. Thus, in representative textbooks of industrial sociology (Miller and Ferns, 1963; Schneider, 1969; Parker et al, 1968), no mention is made of pilferage or theft at work despite its obvious implications for studies of work group behaviour, work socialisation, and the linkage of work and non-work areas of life. Even in monographs covering specific 'pilferage prone' industries such as docks (Liverpool University, 1954) and restaurants (Whyte, 1948), the topic remains unexplored.

In part this reticence can perhaps be explained by sheer ignorance of the extent and importance of pilferage. On this basis it can be argued that middle-class researchers perhaps enter the industrial milieu with ethnocentric 'blinkers' and fail to observe what is an 'alien' practice. Yet the extent

of pilferage is also apparently widespread among middle-class occupations and this has provided one of the notable exceptions to the general silence which is well reported by Dalton (1959, Ch. 7). Another is provided by a recent book of readings on various aspects of deviance in bureaucracies, including pilferage (Smigel and Ross, 1970).

It appears more likely, not that researchers have missed details of pilferage or have failed to realise its significance, but that they have not wished to intrude on three sets of vested interests. These are, firstly, the interests of workers who benefit by the practice. Secondly, the interests of management who collude with workers as part of an indulgency pattern which may permit calm industrial relations and the payment of low wages; and, thirdly, the interest of the researcher himself who may, on ethical grounds, be reluctant to disclose information much of which he may have received in confidence. When to this are added the claims of scientific truth it is evident that the question of ethics involves irreducible conflicts, a position taken by Becker in discussion of this problem. (In McCall and Simmons, 1969, pp. 260-275.)

(2) Cf. Bell, 1959.

(3) There are strong parallels here with the pre-mechanical work groups in coalmines described by Trist and Bamforth (1951, pp. 3-38). These authors describe legitimate work where the total task of coal getting was regarded as a joint undertaking, where leadership and supervision were internal to the group and where "for each participant the task has total significance and dynamic closure". As the authors note, such a combination of features involves a crucial choice of workmates and this, as in the docks, is "made by the men themselves, sociometrically, under full pressure of the reality situation and with longstanding knowledge of each other".

In situations where illegal practices occur, this crucial importance of self selection as contributing to autonomy is of course enhanced.

(4) In emphasising the collective determination of the categories of legitimate and non-legitimate "fiddles" on output, Lupton has commented: "A person or group of persons will tend to judge the behaviour of another person or group by comparing their actual behaviour with the behaviour which, in their belief, is appropriate to the role which the person or group occupies." (Lupton, 1963, p.156).

- (5) 'Quite respectable men, who would not themselves steal, take a light view of pilfering. They seem to think that because the men have grievances they are justified in such conduct. "We are robbed all the time, therefore we are justified in robbing"; or "The employers exploit us, and so why shouldn't we get a bit of our own back?" or "It isn't poor people who will lose by it", are common trains of thought and argument.' (Hilton and others, The Other War (1918) pp. 82-3. The authors discuss various topics from this point of view: e.g. workers' waste of industrial materials, drinking habits, Trade Union restrictions and so on.) In Knowles, Strikes - A Study in Industrial Conflict, 1954, p. 210, fn.
- (6) Not all members of the Union engage in pilferage. Some members of the smaller religious sects are uncompromising in this respect. The Union, for instance, includes a few members who are Salvationists and others who are Seventh Day Adventists: they are thought never to steal and are respected for their views. But the respect accorded them is not one that regards their abstinence as an ideal to be emulated and indeed they are seen as crankish. One informant expressed the common view in answering my query that these were "good people", when he said he thought they might be good - but that they were definitely stunted, meaning stupid. The respect they gain derives from a perception of them as self-sacrificing in the same way that many people might respect the strength of character of vegetarians without feeling they should join them. In neither case does respect often correspond to regard for ideal behaviour afforded by men who perceive themselves as only able to maintain a lower level norm.
- (7) Couldner, 1955.
- (8) Gluckman's concept of "reasonable role playing" is of relevance here. (Gluckman, 1955.)

CHAPTER 7

WORK, NON WORK AND UNION POLITICS

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CHAPTER 7

WORK, NON WORK AND UNION POLITICS

1. Introduction

With our discussion of the degrees and the nature of different kinds of interdependence required for members of a gang to execute normal work, strategies of opposition and pilferage, we are now able to appreciate something of the intensity of feeling men bring to their membership in a regular gang⁽¹⁾. It would be a mistake, however, to consider such involvement by longshoremen as limited to the dock. When men discuss relationships with co-workers they make no distinction between rights and duties owing and owed through interaction at work and rights and duties in social situations beyond the dock. When, for instance, gang members boast, as they do often, of the superiority of their gang compared to others they tend to recount not details of work-based behaviour such as strategies of opposition to foremen - but the number and nature of 'insurance services' their gang has performed for its members compared to the lesser record of other gangs, particularly those on other wharves. By 'insurance services', we mean here the collective and institutionalised support offered by a gang both in economic and in other ways through which the impact of individual crises is able to be modified. In discussing the duality of work and non

work relationships, it, therefore, should be emphasised that such a dichotomy is offered as a heuristic device and must not be confused with longshore perceptions of reality.

The intensity of a gang member's involvement in his gang is manifest and reinforced - in addition to the provision of insurance services - by a further set of activities; these encompass the whole field of leisure. Longshore leisure is essentially spent with other longshoremen and predominantly with members of the same gang. Fishing, hunting and watching sport are the most common outdoor pursuits, whilst drinking is the most usual and widely practised indoor activity. Because of time economy during fieldwork, data was collected only on insurance and drinking as representative of gang organisation in non work activities. Both are essential cooperative, being collectively practised, and both are organised by and within the gang. When either insurance or drinking extends beyond the boundary of the gang the gang is nonetheless found at the core of such extension.

2. The Gang as Insurance Agency

A gang's insurance function is, by definition, most evident during personal crises - particularly those arising through sickness or death. The most usual form is for men to take up a collection on behalf of a sick co-worker.

In a typical case Alan Smith became sick with pneumonia and the men in his gang decided to make a collection among themselves. The suggestion to do so was made by his especial buddy Leon Lloyd - Alan's co-pair in the hold, and it was made after Alan had been sick for three weeks. When the rest of the holdsmen agreed, his friend, on the group's next payday, went to each of the vessel crew and then collected from the skidsmen and the shore crew. All gang members, as is usual in such collections, contributed a dollar and the foreman similarly gave two dollars. This means that Alan was given close to thirty dollars by his gang which was taken by his collector and given to him in hospital.

Such collections are not infrequent on the water front and most gangs find they make four or five such collections a year. It happened that Smith's absence from work, however, was longer than the average. After two months, during which he was still away from the dock, it was decided by members of his gang to "put up a barrel". This involves soliciting collections from all gangs on a wharf, and on a large wharf there could be three or four such collections a year.⁽²⁾ Before this can be done, however, there must be agreement within the gang of the sick man that a collection is justified. This is necessary on two inter-related grounds; firstly, it would be regarded as detracting from the gang's collective prestige if a barrel collection were made that failed to realise an adequate amount. Secondly, a gang that overused the facility

would find that other gangs would eventually fail to take its proposals seriously.

In the Smith case his friend, Leon Lloyd, also organised the putting up of the barrel. The extent of individual contributions, both in range and amount, is much less specific in barrel collections than in those restricted to the gang. Most barrel contributions, however, approximate to half a dollar per head, and Smith's collection raised a little over seventy dollars. This was in fact very close to the figure that had been estimated before the collection took place. Smith was a popular man who had worked for over twenty years on the one wharf, and there had been a reasonable amount of work in the week the collection was made. Nearly double this amount had, however, been raised for an extremely popular member of the executive in a week when there had been plenty of work available on the waterfront. In some extended cases of sickness, men have been able to benefit from more than one barrel collection.

Though it is well recognised that collections are to benefit a man's family, the invariable practice is for all funds to be given to the sick man, and this was so in both collections made for Smith. Smith, as was expected, then gave most of the monies to his wife. This procedure is followed even when men are in hospital and obviously have no personal use for large amounts of money. It is a practice, however, that serves a number of functions.

If Lloyd had gone direct to Smith's home and given

money to his wife he would have compromised both of them. In the separate worlds of men and women which exist in Newfoundland the initiation of action by a man to a woman is regarded as sexually specific and this would be enhanced if money were known to pass to a wife and this done in the absence of her husband. By passing funds direct to Smith, therefore, such embarrassment was obviated. At the same time the action allowed Smith, despite his sickness, to retain in the eyes of himself, his wife and his family, the role of principal family provider.

By passing a collection, whether from the gang or from a barrel, direct to his beneficiary, a collector also fixes and confirms an obligation which is latently repayable in kind. This means that a man who has benefitted from a collection has a specific obligation to reciprocate to his collector if he should later fall sick. A second, and what may be termed a "dispersed obligation", is also created in that a beneficiary is seen as obligated not only to his collector but to all members of his gang for the collection he has received. Such obligation is expected to be repaid at the tavern as well as by a willingness to make the next collection. In Smith's case the next collection was raised by an especial friend of the sick man, but a collective reciprocation was made in beer. Such a dispersed obligation does not extent to members of other gangs who may have contributed to a barrel collection.

There are important differences to note in the two types of collection. In gang collections, as we saw,

there is a fixed rate of contribution; in barrel collections men have a range of choice. In barrel collections, with the decision to collect being beyond the control of most contributors (which would in any case tend to make them resistant to a fixed contribution), we find a minimal expectation of reciprocation, dispersed obligations being too weak to command reciprocity beyond the confines of the gang. In the case of gang collections, however, the institution of standard contributions ensures an equality of receipts as between collections and, therefore, minimises one possible source of division in a unit which emphasises its overt solidarity.

To return to the case of Alan Smith. When Smith finally returned to the dock and was hired, he was still physically weak. His workmates not only then granted him implicit support in the shape up but, as is usual in such cases, sheltered him from too heavy a workload. Since work in the hold is normally the most strenuous of all the gang's work positions, Smith was temporarily placed in the shed where work is lighter. Even there he was cosseted and not expected to lift or drag heavy cargo. After a month of light duties he returned again to the hold and the stower who had acted for him there returned to the shed⁽³⁾.

This account of the benefits received by Alan Smith is given in detail because it encapsulates much of the range of services made available to members of regular gangs. It should be noted that collections, since they are for the benefit of a man's family, are not made for bachelors and

this can be regarded as one more of the discriminations operated against them.

The services offered to gang members are not always so directly economic. Members of one gang were very proud, for instance, that one of their number, requiring fourteen pints of blood after an operation, was supplied - not by his kinsfolk as was common in Newfoundland at that time - but entirely by members of his gang. "He would have had more if he'd needed it", one of them assured me, and others agreed.

Other non economic services are offered in cases of bereavement. Gang members always collect to buy a wreath, and several are expected to attend the funeral. Such attendance cuts across religious barriers and thus serves to demonstrate the occasional subjugation of religious to occupational identity. When I queried that men attend religious ceremonies of other denominations, the answer from both Catholics and Protestants was always unequivocal: "All longshoremen are brothers", I would be told. This is a phrase commonly used to express an ideal valuation of behaviour by longshoremen, but in cases of bereavement, behaviour was seen to follow this ideal prescription⁽⁴⁾.

Collections for wreaths and attendance at funerals are, however, only relevant to a workmate and to members of his immediate family, i.e. to a man, his wife and his children; it does not, therefore, include obligations toward a man's parents or to his siblings. Because of this

limitation bachelors are again seen to be excluded from full participation in gang benefits.

Irrespective of the direct economic benefits which go with regular membership in a gang, insurance benefits derived from gang membership are seen to be of considerable advantage in the insecure milieu of the waterfront. They are, thus, highly valued and particularly so since the fate of outside men who enjoy no such advantages is so contrastingly in evidence. Even within the gang, however, access to such benefits is not equally available. One married father of two, a stower, when answering Question 28 of the Questionnaire concerning his friends, said he had "no particular buddies" and added in explanation, "I've only been in the gang a year". Such a relatively short period of membership, he continued, would mean that if he were sick it would, for instance, be unlikely that a collection would be taken up for him, though he would be expected to contribute to the collection of a more secure gang member.

The fact that members of a gang are integrated within it in different degrees has important implications for relationships both within and between gangs as these occur on the dock and in leisure activities. It means that unbalanced obligations derived from one field of relationships may be restored by reciprocal action in a different field. One of the most important means by which unbalanced obligations derived from work are balanced off the dock is through the medium of drinking and the buying of drinks.

3. The Sociology of Drinking

Drinking on the dock, though it occurs, is not a frequent occurrence and men who need refreshment tend to drink water or Cola. This is partly because drunkenness is prohibited by management and men have been fired from particular boats for being drunk, but principally because the most effective social control is derived from the men who themselves exert a pressure towards sobriety. Men who are drunk are likely to prove a danger in dockwork, and there are some ten or twelve outside men who owe their demotion to being too often drunk on the dock. When this occurs on an odd occasion, men will cover up for such a colleague (often indeed literally so - men will be hidden under a tarpaulin, for instance, well away from prying eyes until they recover). If this occurs too often, however, word will be passed to the foreman that such a man is "too much of a lush to be carried" and there will be no collective support when he comes to be dropped from the shape up.

Because drinking is, however, very important to longshoremen it appeared their most common leisure activity. Yet when the Questionnaire was being applied, Questions 29 and 30 (on leisure activities) hardly ever elicited replies suggesting that men spent any time drinking either with or without their workmates. In the early stages of interviewing and after several interviews each with little mention of drinking, I administered the Questionnaire to a man well-known for social drinking. In answering Questions 29 and

30 he, too, made no mention of his well-known hobby; he said instead that he went fishing in his spare time. "Don't you ever go drinking with your buddies?" I asked. "Hell!" he replied, "I didn't think you counted drinking! Everyone drinks with their buddies!"

Though most of the membership do indeed drink with their buddies, the pattern of their drinking, the locale in which they drink, even the beverages they choose, are very different as between the two main classes in the Union, the regular men and the outside men and these distinctions, which are socially determined, serve to emphasise their social separation. Regular men are seen to drink in taverns close to their wharf; they sit with their regular workmates and they drink beer: outside men, even though working on the same wharves, usually drink in the open air or sit in parked cars and they drink rum or wine in groups that constantly vary in membership. When, exceptionally, outside men do patronise a tavern, they choose the Crosby Hotel situated close to the Union Hall, which is rarely visited by regular men⁽⁵⁾. When at the Crosby outside men, too, drink beer. How can these differences be explained?

1) Regular Men's Drinking Groups

Observation of regular men drinking together reveals that they physically project their position in the work structure into the drinking situation. Regular longshoremen in St. John's do their drinking in about ten bars⁽⁶⁾ all situated along or close to the waterfront, and their choice

of tavern depends on the wharves they most regularly work. Furness Withy men drink, for instance, in two taverns close to the Furness Withy wharf. This correspondence of work and drinking extends further than choice of tavern. In sitting together men arrange themselves according to gang membership and job within the limitations of layout allowed by the seating - mostly small round or square tables designed for four. Thus, as an example, holdsmen tend to sit together and if two separate tables are occupied by holdsmen the pair system from the hold will tend still to be in evidence, and sitting with them might be one or both winchmen and perhaps the signaller.

In a similar manner, men from the shed also sit together, often with the fork lift driver, and they too reveal in the tavern differences which divide and unite them at work. Thus, one table might well include stowers 16, 17, 18 and 19, but would be less likely to comprise stowers 16, 17, 18 and say, 22; the latter stower being more likely to be found sitting with his own stowing team rather than with members of the other half of the total stowing gang. If, however, stowers and holdsmen enter a bar together or find themselves the only members of their gang in a tavern at a particular time, then they are likely to sit together, perhaps later to move to another table of their closer colleagues. Otherwise, seating arrangements follow closely the technical and pilferage groupings already described. The socio-technical system of the dockers work gang is thus, after work, directly transferred to the tavern.

It is significant to note here that the physical and social isolation of the skidsmen in their work situation is also reflected in their isolation from the drinking groups. We saw how skidsmen, physically isolated on the quay side, have little access to cargo and their cooperation in pilferage is not required by other members of the gang. In the taverns this technical and social isolation is carried through. Though skidsmen, if they do drink with the gang, might initially sit with men from the two main groups, they rarely sit there for as long as other members and often they find some excuse either to move from the bar or to another table.

Talk is avid in the taverns and much of this is to do with work; either its episodes, its prospects or relationships with co-workers and with management. Such conversations frequently reflect seating arrangements in that both derive from the system of alliances and estrangements which emanate from the deck. On one occasion, for instance, when a skidsman was drinking with a group of his gang's stowers, the problems that had arisen in the shed when dealing with that day's cargo of vegetables were discussed for about a quarter of an hour. Men often discuss in minute detail the difficulties experienced on the previous shift, and on this occasion the skidsman, unable to make any relevant contribution to the discussion, early left the table. On yet another occasion, a holdsmen found himself at a table with stowers from his gang, when the conversation turned to criticism of the holdsmen for allegedly hoisting overweight slings. Discussion

became heated and the isolated holdsman also withdrew.

One important topic of conversation was the passing of information about expected times of arrival of boats. Since arrival times are not posted men are dependent on their contacts for such information, and its lack can be correspondingly serious. Discussion in the taverns of future, expected and delayed work serves, therefore, to distribute or restrict information between and within selected members of a gang. Information is usually obtained by a foreman from the company office and he then passes it to his "key men" in the gang - that is, by definition, to his most secure members. They then distribute or restrict such information to less integrally secure members of the gang.

These differences in security and, therefore, in prestige within a gang are observable in taverns in terms of who talks. The jibes of longshoremen are, for instance, frequently directed against the two low status categories in their ranks, bachelors and old men. Such jibes are usually initiated by the more secure members of a gang. New members who are not regarded as fully integrated within its membership are not expected to speak out in this way, even though they may be young and married⁽⁷⁾. Prestige is also 'visible' in the observation of who buys drinks. The buying of drinks in taverns does not follow the English 'round' buying system, where each member buys in turn for all other members of the group. Instead, men buy their drinks, predominantly beer, for themselves and for one,

maybe two or perhaps three, companions at the same table. When tables are set together the same arrangements apply. The buying of drinks was not observed to be symmetrical; the most recent and most marginal men tending to buy more than their arithmetical share whilst others, particularly the old-established key members of a gang, tending to buy less.

It is very common to find that the tavern's drinking groups contain men away from normal work through sickness or injury. These longshoremen make their way to the gang's tavern when they expect to find the gang present. They are not expected to buy drinks but will instead be "treated" while off work. I have observed men obviously too injured or sick to work, nonetheless hobbling towards their gang's regular tavern to meet their workmates at the end of a shift. These "off work" appearances in the tavern serve to reinforce an absentee's temporarily weakened ties to his gang, and help to ensure that his membership does not lapse. When such a man comes eventually to re-present himself at a shape up, he can hope to be assured of continuing membership in the gang, i.e. that his workmates will, as in the case of Alan Smith, maintain support for him were he to be dropped by the foreman. As one longshoreman described it, "We will know him at the shape up".

Men in this situation are in an especially marginal position in the taverns. Unable to reciprocate in the buying of drinks they are also in a weak position to enter into discussions that might become heated, as indeed many do. Belligerence in argument demands at least prestige

equality and this is not likely to be maintained when a man is unable to balance the recipience of his drinks from others. The contribution of such men to discussion is, therefore, usually muted especially since absence from the work situation, even for a week or so, restricts knowledge of day-to-day work events on which pivots so much of tavern conversation and on which so much of the personal gossip about gang members is based.

These different degrees of integration found within a gang are also reflected in men's presence or absence from the drinking groups; exceptionally marginal as well as exceptionally secure gang members both tending to absence. The most marginal members of a gang are casually employed outside men. Gangs often contain men "filling in" while regular men they replace are injured, are sick or have decided to take a day or two off. If a temporary gang member regularly belongs to another gang on the same wharf, he is likely to be found drinking with his temporary hosts at the tavern after work. If, however, he is permanently an outside man, "filling in" where he can and with no regular gang attachment, then he is extremely unlikely to be found in the tavern.

By a seeming paradox, the most secure gang members also tend to be absent from the taverns. As we saw, the greatest security of all gang positions is that of hatch checker. Enjoying a special relationship to the foreman, to whom their scarce skill in "knowing the marks" makes them especially valuable, they are also in a unique position in

the system of gang reciprocities - particularly those derived from pilferage. Accordingly hatch checkers are rarely found in the taverns. One hatch checker known to join with selected friends (including the anthropologist) in a nip in the privacy of his home, was nonetheless regarded by his workmates as a lifelong teetotaler - and this despite the fact of more than twenty years work within one wharf. "Some of them drink a lot and I'd rather keep out of it", he explained. Not many men in the gangs are in the structurally determined position of being able to keep out of the taverns if they so choose. There is a further category of gang worker absent from the taverns. These are many of the Union activists - outspoken members of gangs who "speak for the premises" in both gang and wharfwide disputes with management. These men are the "link pins" between gang and Union organisation, and their role and structural situation will be considered in greater detail later.

ii) Outside Men's Drinking Groups

Like the drinking of regular men, outside men's drinking also serves the function of paying off obligations and of balancing reciprocities. This is particularly important for them since their security is even more tenuous than that of regular men, and thus their dependence on contacts and information even more crucial. Unlike the drinking of regular men, however, outside men do not drink in groups of any regular constituency since their work relationships are essentially shifting and transitory.

One very marginal outside man, Johnny O'Neill, who shared my lodgings, depended on a large number of quasi-regular and outside friends for tips about the arrival times of boats and the hirings of particular foremen. When a friend received his own advance warning, he would sometimes, but not always, tip off Johnny who was enabled thereby also to stand a chance of being hired. Johnny stated that all his friends each had "lots of buddies", and therefore they did not tell him of every boat or of likely vacancies in a specific gang servicing a particular boat. It was important for Johnny to know, however, if and when his friends had been hired even without a tip off, since by this means he could determine the strength of his obligations and ensure the reciprocity of obligations owing to him. Johnny, therefore, attended shape ups in many instances just to see who was hired - "to see how things are going". When payday came he stepped out to meet both his clients and patrons of the week. "George Brosant (an almost equally marginal outside man) will know me today", he would say of a friend who he knew had been earning and by this knowledge he could claim his entitlement in the drink it was expected George would be buying.

Drinking takes place either in parked cars or, if weather is good and the police not too vigilant, in groups out in the open. These outdoor drinking groups are nearly always seen to comprise outside men, though occasionally one or two regular men may also be found in such a group. They often contain up to six or maybe, exceptionally, up to eight men, and the drink taken is most frequently

a virulent Newfoundland rum known as "Screetch" (£4) or, if funds are particularly short, a cheap bottle of wine "Finky" (£0.90) might be bought instead.

The routine of drinking is formally maintained and was observed to be always the same. The man who has either supplied money for the bottle or, more usually, the largest share of money for its purchase, nods, winks or beckons to his selected co-drinkers who will leave whoever they are talking to and follow him. When a group is thereby gathered the host will produce from a pocket the bottle and a small glass - about the size of a large egg-cup - and he then passes both bottle and glass to his principal guest. Under the casual but watchful eyes of the group the guest will then partly fill the glass, empty it and return both glass and bottle to his host. The process then continues to the next guest and on throughout the group.

Sometimes a host will entertain several groups from the same bottle. When he thinks enough drink has been expended on a particular group he will recork the bottle, put it in his pocket and the group will then disperse. The host is then free to collect together a new group, some of whom might well include members of the previous group. By this means a man with a bottle can control and balance different degrees of obligation and reciprocity which he feels relevant to different individuals. A particularly favoured workmate, for instance, can be "given the wink" to attend two or perhaps even three consecutive sessions,

whilst a less favoured obligator can be dispensed with after only one. A host controls the rate of drinking in his groups by holding on to bottle and glass for greater or lesser periods between handouts. He is, therefore, in a position to control the length of time members talk together, and in this way a man with a bottle has some control over how long he is able to occupy the centre of the social stage⁽⁸⁾.

The type of collective drinking found among outside men can be seen, therefore, to maximise the payment of social obligations with a minimum of material investment. One man with one bottle of spirits has control of approximately 20 units of social credit. He can concentrate these on a few men or can disperse them over a wider number. In all cases, however, each drink - as a specific unit of social credit - is issued before an audience, and an increment of obligation thereby obtained or repaid each time bottle and glass are passed - and seen to pass - from host to guest.

4. Marginality and Integration Within the Gang

By an examination of the non work behaviour of members of the longshore work gang we have seen how closely articulated are these levels of activity and it has been noted how rights and duties derived from one sphere are transferable for settlement in another⁽⁹⁾. We now come to consider the criteria and processes by which men are recruited to membership in such groupings; it being remembered that the gangs have some considerable say in

their own constituency.

It should first be noted that men are not lightly offered membership in a gang. Though a man might be regularly hired it takes some considerable time before he can regard himself as fully enmeshed in a gang's system of rights and duties. When discussing the constituency of their gangs with regular longshoremen it became apparent that each gang always contains marginal members. It further became evident that a marginal man's limited period of service in the gang is, however, only one factor contributing to his marginality, and that a more important one derives from his relative seniority in the gang vis-a-vis new inductees. This means that the newest members in a gang always remain marginal until their mantle of marginality can, in effect, be taken on in their turn by even newer arrivals.

This practice of "imposed marginality" contributes to the gang's autonomous identity. In restricting the grant of full member status, more established members of a gang are enabled to emphasise their own collective identity, and the exclusiveness of their individual memberships within it. At the same time they benefit materially to a disproportionate extent as well as in prestige, in that a flow of obligations is always offered up to them from a constantly renewed prestige level at the gang's base. The members of this low prestige level then rise through time as they become progressively integrated.

The gradations of membership found within the gang,

together with the corresponding understanding that men need to work a period of time before full acceptance, can be understood as serving some of the functions of apprenticeship⁽¹⁰⁾. As with more formal apprenticeships, men in the St. John's dock have to learn social requirements of their job as well as a purely technical understanding of the work. Indeed, the articulation of both social and technical factors in dock work means that technical competence alone represents only a relatively small proportion of the total requirements involved in a work role. To these, of course, must also be added the necessity for men to learn the social requirements involved in and occupying non work roles such as that of drinking companion. Unlike many other industrial situations, however, the docks in St. John's have no rites de passage that abruptly mark the transition from tyro through marginality to full membership. Not only is there no manifest point at which the transition occurs - there being no "first time" at which a man can be seen to occupy a different status⁽¹¹⁾ - but marginality within the gangs is largely an internal affair. There is thus no external reference which can be used to justify and claim a superior status.

Because the social element within both work and non work roles is so important to their total performance we find a considerable consensus on the personal qualities required in a workmate. Amongst the most important, and one never omitted in discussion of this topic, was the view that men must be trustworthy, especially on matters of pilferage and to authority. As more than one informant

expressed it, "They shouldn't rat - that's the first thing". Almost as important was the view that men should not slack in the essentially cooperative task of cargo clearance. "No one will work with a slinger." A third requirement emphasised the possession of a generalised social sense that accepts and participates in the fellowship of the gang. As this was expressed, "There's not much room in the gang for a loner"⁽¹²⁾.

There is little ambiguity surrounding assessment of the first two propositions; it is the third, however, which permits relative variations, choice and, therefore, the possibility of exclusion. When men talk of a generalised social requirement for gang membership they can, under pressure of questioning, be narrowed to a specific requirement. This essentially involves a man's participating in drinking. There is an extremely strong suspicion of men who do not drink. When I asked a group of longshoremen why someone who was married, young, fit and hardworking was nonetheless an outside man, the answer given was that he was "a loner". When I asked what form this took, I was told "He doesn't drink - that's what I mean by a loner".

According to this assessment, we would expect to find a preponderance of non drinking members of the Union within the ranks of outside men and this would be explicable in terms of the necessary adjunct to a gang's work activities provided by drinking. Unfortunately, though the number and proportion of non drinkers is undoubtedly very small, no enquiries followed with this question in mind. What was

found, however, was that, despite the expressed importance of drinking as a norm for gang members, many of the gangs contained at least one non drinker. How can their presence be explained?

The significance of non drinkers became apparent when discussing with longshoremen and with managers the characteristics of gang spokesmen. These are men who, as we saw in the Dog Hale Case, speak out for the gang against the foreman. They may do this directly or, more commonly, may speak out against holdsmen for the hoisting of overweight slings. Sometimes, however, they may make an approach direct to a wharf superintendent or to a manager.

All of these activities can be considered dangerous. Even an indirect attack on a foreman via the holdsmen can well result in a spokesman being victimised at subsequent shape ups. There are enough cases of this having happened for men to be well aware of its likelihood, and a man's only defence against such action is the collective support of his gang.

There is general agreement on what appears at first sight to be five non exclusive classes of stower who require such support. Firstly, if there is an Executive member in the gang he will be expected to speak out if this is thought necessary. Secondly, if a gang contains no Executive member but there is one in an adjacent gang, he will also be expected to speak if asked to do so. Thirdly, a very secure member - one with long service in the gang - might occasionally act in this way. A fourth category comprising

marginal members of the gang - often new inductees - who are not fully accepted as gang members may so act. The fifth category comprises men regarded as established spokesmen for the gangs. These are men who are not usually members of the Executive though some had a record of election attempts; they are found to speak almost as much for the men in other gangs as for their own, and it is this group within the wider group of spokesmen who tend to be termed "agitators", an appellation offered by both management and members of the Union Executive.

When this latter group were examined in greater detail, twelve men other than Executive members were identified by cross checking with different informants, and an attempt made to see if they possessed characteristics in common. Though nine were regarded as very secure members of their gangs - all having been members for more than five years - eight of these were thought of as being personally unpopular with their workmates. It was then discovered that of these eight six were non drinkers, four being members of Alcoholics Anonymous. All were stowers.

The position of such men as secure members of regular gangs can, therefore, be regarded as highly anomalous. Many fail to satisfy the gang norm of general sociability and some the specific norm of being a drinker. Yet despite these defects their position in the gangs is regarded as secure - so secure that foremen are unable to remove them and - as in a case already noted, a wharf superintendent

remarked of one such man, "He's a real bastard - always causes trouble. If we could get rid of him that would be a peaceful gang".

One explanation of the anomalous security of such spokesmen would appear to lie in a wider understanding of men's integration in their gangs. Normally men must conform to norms of what constitutes an adequate workmate. By the normal social processes of socialisation and social controls, as well as passing through the process of relative seniority, most men eventually become acceptable as full gang members and are then enmeshed in the system of rights and duties which this involves. "Agitators, however, obtain the rights of gang membership - or at least the principal right of gang support against being unhired at the shape up - but in return, their reciprocal payment is made in a different coin. Their duties are seen - not as generalised participators in the overall social life of the gang - but specifically as suppliers of a dangerous service on behalf of the rest of their fellows.

It is thus apparent that the role of spokesman, and particularly within this category that of "agitator", is more than the mere random apportionment of an informal task or, as management is wont to believe, one that can be understood solely on the psychological grounds of individual propensities. It is evident instead that its allocation is directly linked to the variable degrees of integration and, therefore, of security found within the shore gang: the role can thus be considered to be socially determined.

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Men who are well integrated socially - those with long service in the gang or having the protection of Executive office - can act as spokesmen at relatively little cost in risk to their position. On the other hand, marginal members of the gang - new inductees to membership among the stowers - have little to lose and much to gain by acting as spokesmen. As new inductees their position in any event is tenuous; they can readily be dropped at a shape up with few regrets from other members of the gang. If, however, they achieve the position of established spokesman ("agitator"), they are seen to perform a distinct, and what is considered a dangerous, service for their workmates and one whose loss if they were to be dropped would be much missed. In such a case the more established the spokesman the more defensive is the gang to protect his position. This is the case even, and perhaps especially, when such a spokesman is unpopular with his workmates and when he can be seen as conforming to few of the norms of behaviour normally considered essential to gang membership.

On occasions when an "agitator" has been moved out of a gang - through sickness or injury rather than by the action of management - the void has often been quickly filled. One experienced Executive member explained this process as follows: "If a gang needs someone to speak for it there's always someone who will speak up. It gives someone new a chance to be useful - and everyone's grateful for that." On this interpretation the gang's practice of "imposed marginality" is seen as providing an ever present source

of potential spokesmen. Such an assessment of the socially determined role of "agitators", besides countering management's conspiracy view of the industrial situation, also runs counter to much of the human relationist's view on group leadership. Sayles and Strauss (1960, p. 91) put their view as follows:

"Many studies have been conducted to determine the personality traits that characterize the effective group leader, but none of these studies has been altogether successful. It appears that each group requires a type of leadership suited to its own particular needs. These studies do suggest one important generalization, however: The group leader must live up to the group's idealized conception of what a group member should be. In the study of the bank-wiring room at the Western Electric Company, the informal leader of the group was described as follows:

He was a key member of the superior clique and ... one of the two men whose output conformed most closely and consistently to the accepted idea of a proper day's work.... In every way, indeed, he embodied the norms the group had adopted as its own. He never broke a rate, "chiseled", "squealed", or took a superior tone...." (Homans, 1950, p. 147).

No mention is made of whether such leaders "live up to the group's idealized conceptions of what a group member should be" when outside the plant or when not performing legitimate work tasks. It can, however, be argued that "agitators" in the St. John's dock are not "leaders" in the sense referred to above - that they are instead "false leaders". False leaders, the authors suggest, are those who -

"... may aspire to a position of leadership without ever winning group acceptance. Outsiders may assume that these men are more influential than they actually are, when they are particularly active in contacting others. It is important to distinguish between the two types of leader, since the false leader rarely represents the true feelings of the group he pretends to lead." (Sayles and Strauss, 1960, p.91.)

This appears to be a dichotomy that is unable to be sustained, at least for St. John's longshoremens, and seems to have more in common with the managerial view of conspirators as somehow isolated individuals acting irrespective of group influences.

5. Spokesmen and Union Politics

We have said that spokesmen can act for members of other gangs as well as for their own. Acting in this context does not include slowing up - since this is essentially a gang's local tactic aimed at a gang's own foreman - it comprises instead the voicing of complaints and the organising of wharf-wide activity on matters that affect all gangs on a wharf. Complaints and action against individual foremen are, quite definitely on the other hand, considered the province of the gang itself - certainly in the early stages of action. When a stower at a Union general meeting raised a complaint, apparently on behalf of his own gang, I queried why he should bring this matter to the general membership. Why not, I asked an experienced member of the Executive, instigate remedial action within the gang itself? It was then explained that the matter

was not a local gang concern. "Nobody ever speaks (at meetings) for the gang. Everyone knows he's really speaking for the premises (the wharf)".

An example of wharfwide action occurred during fieldwork when all the gangs on one wharf objected to the permanent closing of a gate which allowed men to slip on and off the dock during working hours but which meant a long walk at the beginning and end of shifts. The complaint was raised and action organised by a particularly active stower who saw the superintendent and the manager and who threatened a walk off until the gate was opened.

It thus occurs that credits and debits of obligation and reciprocity arise between spokesmen and men in other gangs on the same wharf who use their services. It is in the competition for and the balancing of these reciprocities that the basis of Union political activity is seen to exist and this balance is effected through support offerings and by the casting of votes in Union elections. In one sense, indeed, much Union political activity can be understood as the deliberate creation of obligations by men standing for Union office who thereby hope to increase their support at these times.

The role of spokesmen, therefore, emerges as basic to an appreciation of the Union's political situation when this is considered dynamically. They can be regarded as "link pins" between levels of action, occupied by the gang/foreman and that of the wharf/superintendent. In this position they are enabled to influence Union policy

in its dealings with management. A more complete articulation between wharf and top Union level is obtainable only by spokesmen securing election to the Executive and thereby to some degree obtaining legitimation. This is a theme to be explored in the following chapter.

6. Conclusions

Regular men can only offset their individual vulnerability in the shape up by combination in united work gang. Such combination allows them a degree of control over their own constituency. The gangs, however, contain men who are integrated within them in different degrees, and this creates different levels of obligation between relatively marginal and relatively integral gang members. Further imbalance of obligations arise also from the nature of the jobs that men perform in a gang as well as their role in the system of pilferage.

By interpreting behaviour in terms of exchange within and between different spheres of activity, however, we see that unbalanced obligations derived from one sphere may be balanced by action in another. When the gangs were examined from the standpoint of their non work behaviour in providing insurance services and in drinking it was found that obligations and reciprocities from the dock were carried through to these activities and vice versa. Insurance benefits, for instance, were accordingly distributed by criteria not only derived from the dock

but also in terms of a beneficiary's marital status.

In a similar manner, regular men's drinking groups maintained and reinforced different levels of prestige which were derived from the wider culture as well as the dock. At the same time they provided a mechanism for excluding unwanted and marginal co-workers; they thus not only allowed a ready means of balancing obligations but also created new obligations by, for instance, the special drinking licences granted to men too sick to work. In so acting, the gang's drinking group articulated the spheres of leisure, insurance, family and work.

A comparison was then made with the drinking behaviour of outside men who were seen to develop obligations and to balance their reciprocities within a wider ranging network of contacts not derived from the work they performed in gangs. Accordingly, outside men's obligations, being more widely dispersed, were seen reflected in a pattern of drinking that had to adapt to varied intensities at different times and between different individuals since, within their more tenuous networks and unlike regular men, they could well be overall patrons one day and clients the next. Regular men's obligations, on the other hand, deriving from a relatively closed field and being more stable, were reflected in drinking groups that were essentially stratified, externally exclusive and mutually supportive.

Examination of the nature, process and functions of integration in the gangs revealed men's need to conform to a gang's norms if gangs were collectively to sponsor and

support their membership. It was found, however, that some men obtained rights to such membership but did not conform to gang norms - their obligations were repaid in a different coin. These were men, often personally unpopular as co-workers and a high proportion of whom did not drink, who acted as spokesmen for the gang in the dangerous task of opposing management. Such men established the basis of political activity in the Union by providing spokesmen services beyond the limits of their gang affiliation and thereby extended their influence throughout the wharf. Wider political influence, however, could only be derived from legitimating election to the Union Executive.

Footnotes to Chapter 7

- (1) This importance that men place on relationships with co-workers was shown by their answers to Questions 28 and 40 of the Questionnaire. The 40 regular gang members who were interviewed listed 45 friends in answer to Question 28 - all of whom were fellow longshoremen, whilst a half of these (22) comprised co-gang workers. When answering Question 40, concerning positive aspects of the job that they enjoyed, 19 spontaneously mentioned some aspect of work gang relationships; such as - "the crowd I work with", or "We've got a good team", or "I work with good buddies". In answering Question 28, the 14 outside men who were interviewed listed 13 friends who were longshoremen - close to the same proportion as regular men. Only 4, however, specified "people" in answer to aspects of the job that they liked.
- (2) By the time fieldwork occurred the organisation of such collections had become less systematised. With the introduction of payment by cheque, barrel collections on the wharf ceased. The banks, however objected to longshoremen soliciting contributions on or near to their premises, believing this detracted from the dignity of their function as

money changers. Longshoremen regarded this as one more example of the discriminations practised upon them as an occupation.

- (3) A similar cossetting situation is reported from the Port of Vancouver, Canada. See Philpott, 1965.
- (4) For similar reasons the Union flag is always flown at half mast on the death of a member - irrespective of his religion and even though the flag is basically the Irish tricolour but with the letters 'L.S.P.U.' superimposed on the middle panel. The flag's design was chosen on the Union's foundation in 1903 when Catholic (Irish) and Protestant (English) antagonisms were rife in the island and when Orangemen marches frequently led to bloody fights in the city. It is perhaps relevant to note here the scrupulous attention made within gangs to minimise religious effect manifest as religious discrimination. As one example, Seventh Day Adventists will not work on Saturdays and other fundamental sect members will not work on Sundays. If work on a boat extends over these periods such men are permitted by their workmates to nominate their own replacements - a privilege not permitted in other cases of absence.
- (5) Except for Executive members who find it convenient to the Union office, and who find their presence there politically useful, especially in the periods prior to elections.
- (6) These are essentially male preserves, women being barred by Provincial Law from attendance at taverns though they are allowed into cocktail bars.
- (7) "... the right to gossip about certain people is a privilege which is only extended to a person when he or she is accepted as a member of a group or set. It is a hallmark of membership." (Gluckman, 1963, pp. 307-15.)
- (8) This control by the host appeared to be not uncommon in Newfoundland. Thus, Chiaramonte writing about domestic hospitality on the south coast of Newfoundland: "The host is able to control the tempo of the gathering because a man will not usually take a drink until the host invites him. One host may invite each in turn to take a drink with little or no time lapse between the moment a man finishes his drink and sits down, or he may wait several minutes before inviting the next man. After each has had a drink, the host may delay starting another round." Of course, if a host also controls use of the only glass as well as of the bottle - as he certainly does among St. John's longshoremen, then his control of the tempo of drinking is absolute. See Chiaramonte, L.J. in Halpert, H. and Story, G.W. (Eds.) 1969.

- (9) This approach to social behaviour as exchange is derived in its more modern form from Homans (1958 and 1961) and Blau (1964), though anthropologists have particularly followed Mauss (1925) and Malinowski (1922).
- (10) Smith, A. 1969, p. 15.
- (11) Van Gennep, A. 1960, p. 175.
- (12) There is an obvious similarity here with social requirements found in the Bank Wiring Room by the Hawthorn Researchers. In the St. John's dock, however, there is no equivalence to "rate buster". This is probably because the nature of the overall task of cargo clearance allows no scope for an individual to set a rate that is different from his immediate co-workers - even if the gang's controls were to allow it. Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939, p. 379.

CHAPTER 8UNION DEMOCRACY AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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CHAPTER 8

UNION DEMOCRACY AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

1. Introduction

Any understanding of the processes of industrial relations above the micro level of gang and wharf must take account of structural aspects of the Union and its membership. These can usefully be considered in terms of the considerable constraints they offer to interaction and cooperation between different interests and groups within the Union. There are two principal kinds of such constraint operating in the L.S.P.U. These derive from the structure of its membership, which is both occupationally and socially heterogeneous and the structure of the Union as an organisation, which acts to limit any high degree of consensus other than in particular situations.

2. Divisions Within the Body of the Membership

The Union's membership, as we have seen, is divided on a number of bases which can be expected to provide different and often conflicting interests. Amongst the most basic of these is that between regular and outside men. Given the limited supply of work available a gain in work for one of these groups is perceived as a loss of work by the other. We have seen too how religion acts as

as a divisive force within the membership as this applies to men's voting behaviour in Union elections. To these divisions must also be added the physical separation which largely limits regular men to working in one wharf and the rough approximation found between men's work places and their residence. Finally, the strong occupation divisions which separate regular men serve to reinforce the already considerable fissiparous tendencies we have mentioned, particularly those existing between the vessel crews and the shore gangs, which also reflect an age differential.

These divisions are, as might be expected, manifest within the Union Executives. In particular, the significance of a man's workplace is apparent when the workplace of Executive members is considered.

Of the approximately 620 active workforce, some 330 men work regularly at the two main wharfs. A further 60 work mostly regularly, at various smaller premises, the majority of these being employed at the C.N.R. dock, whilst approximately 170 are outside men without regular affiliation to any particular wharf. Of members of four Executives (1958, 1960, 1962, 1964, none worked outside the two main wharves: employees of the smaller firms were not represented on the Executive, and neither were outside men - the former because they lack the opportunity to exploit any large network of support; the latter because they are peripheral to any network.

The number of men contained within these four Executives was fifteen. Of these, eight were stowers;

two shed checkers; two hatch checkers; two were holdsmen; and one a forklift truck driver. When considered by religion twelve were revealed as Catholics and three as Protestants.

One further principle could also be seen as important in contributing to a man's chance of Executive office; this was literacy. Though no figures were collected on literacy within the overall membership, members of the Executive, in discussion, agreed that about a half of the membership was illiterate. All but two of the fifteen, however, were literate so that this would appear an important factor in their election. When men were asked whether they had ever stood for election they often replied that they had not because they lacked the education which in this context is taken as the ability to read, write and talk well.

It can now be seen how large segments of the membership are precluded from Executive office. An illiterate outside man who is a Protestant stands a negligible chance of election whereas an educated Catholic, regularly employed as a stower at one of the two larger premises, has a multiplicity of influences from which to launch his campaign. It is, therefore, only within this residual minority that the element of personal charisma can become significant.

These social and physical limits on competition for Union office can be taken, therefore, as indicative also of constraints affecting policy formation within the Union. There are two aspects to be considered here. Firstly, physical and social insulation, by definition, limit interaction on which essential prior political activity depends.

Secondly, the supposition can be made that since some categories of worker are never found on the Executive their interests are never likely to be pressed where these might be seen as conflicting with interests of regular men at the larger wharves. Outside men, for instance, have never been represented on the Union Executive and, for over 60 years, until 1964, the Union has never aimed to replace shape up hiring with a rotationary system which would benefit them at the expense of regular men.

Even regular men, however, find it difficult to coalesce around any one interest or associational category. Regular men on one wharf, for instance, do not necessarily perceive a joint interest with regular men on other wharves, whilst support for a policy may be given or withheld solely on a consideration of its advocates' religion. Thus, sections of the Union's membership which are politically active should not be regarded as structurally specific: and the bases of their recruitment to factions, as Firth has observed in a discussion of their formation (Firth, 1957), can rest on specific interest or associational ties or a combination of several of these. They are, therefore, loosely ordered and informally organised whilst the membership of different factions has not been consistent on different occasions. Even within the Union hierarchy, however, though the men who serve tend to social and occupational homogeneity, we still find that structural aspects of organisation act in ways which are divisive.

3. Divisions Within the Union Hierarchy

The Union contains an Executive of eight working longshoremen and one full-time President who are chosen at elections held in May every two years. Besides the President who in 1963 received \$5,000 a year, the Union employs two other full-time officials - a Delegate who spends his time on the waterfront and who receives \$4,600, and a Union Janitor who receives \$3,000. Both latter positions are secure for incumbents once they are appointed and though both can be replaced by a majority vote of the membership this has never occurred or been at issue. A President, on the other hand, is liable to face the insecurity of elections every two years which, as we shall see, involves him in considerable role strain.

The President's role is only vaguely defined in the Union's Constitution. Article X, paragraph 43, under Duties of Officers, merely states: "the President shall preside at all meetings of the Union, conserve order and see that the Constitution and Bye-Laws are carried out. He shall also superintend the general affairs of the Union". This description of his duties makes no mention of the main day-to-day activities of the President or of his role as principal negotiator of contracts with the employers. From the members' viewpoint he is to be seen in the Union office during office hours wearing a business suit and is expected to be available to answer their queries on a range of topics that often have little to do with the waterfront. He is expected, for instance, to advise on

problems of relationships with welfare agencies and on the payment of local taxes which often cause difficulty to men with a low standard of literacy. In his relationships with the men he is in many ways, therefore, perceived as little more than a welfare officer. As far as day-to-day unionism is concerned, this is seen by both management and men to be in the hands of the Delegate. As one manager expressed it in nodding towards the Delegate's departing figure - "There goes the real power on this waterfront".

The Delegate's job is to act as a kind of full-time and salaried Shop Steward, formally subject to the authority of the Executive. It is the Delegate's job to "police" the agreement on the Union's behalf. This necessitates his constant presence on all the wharves of the waterfront and it is understandable, therefore, that the occupant of the Delegate's post is often referred to as the man who knows more about the waterfront than anyone else. As such, of course, he is in a better position than the President, who is chairbound, and the Executive, who are individually restricted to one wharf, both in having information about particular events and in his control of communication. This control is two-way - extending both downwards to the men and upwards to the President and Executive. The structural situation of the Delegate, therefore, must be regarded as crucial to an understanding of political processes within the Union.

A Delegate's duties and the limits to his authority are also undefined in the Union's constitution. Article

XIII, outlining his position, merely states that "his powers and duties shall be defined by the Executive". Though this description allows for ambiguities, the duties of a delegate are well understood. As stated, it is his job "to police the agreement", a definition he himself gave to me and one in which the President and various Superintendents concurred. The men's view of the Delegate's job often reflected a bitterness towards management - as one stower said, it is "to see the employers don't pull a fast one". Most of a Delegate's time is accordingly spent in routinely ensuring that agreed limits to working capacities are not exceeded, that men are paid extra for dirty or dangerous cargo and that men cease work in heavy rain.

The ambiguity, and therefore potential conflict, which accrue to the Delegate's role arises, however, not from dispute over his duties but from debate about the limits of his authority: these limits are perceived differently by the men, the President and the Employers. All agree that a watchdog function is legitimately part of a Delegate's job. But the decisions he is expected to take if disagreement occurs about the weight of a sling load, for instance, or whether rain is too heavy for men to work, is not formalised - and further - has to be made on the spot. The resulting ambiguity often leads to conflict to which the Delegate is a party - and which reflects a situation found in other ports. Thus, in a British Government White Paper⁽¹⁾ investigating troubles in the London docks,

it is recorded that:

"In the first place, there are certain inescapable features of dock work which create almost constant opportunities for disputes to occur, in a way which probably does not arise in any other industry. It is not suggested that the nature of dock work is such that frequent disputes and stoppages are inevitable; indeed, given goodwill and mutual trust, there is ample joint machinery for settling all differences without interruption of work. The fact remains, however, that there are greater opportunities for disputes to occur and for the activities of deliberate trouble-makers than in most other industries."

and

"... in factory production there is not the same variety of circumstances nor the same range of materials to be handled. Moreover the workers employed on any one job in the docks seldom constitute a stable group as they would in factory employment. They do not continue to do the same kind of work in the same place for long periods, as normally happens in a factory. The precise circumstances of a particular job may never recur, and once it is finished, the men concerned will often be dispersed among other kinds of work and other employers. They are naturally anxious to see a settlement of any dispute about payments before the job is finished, and therefore often slow up or stop work in order to enforce a settlement as favourable as possible to themselves. As, in so many cases, the men are not in regular employment with the employer concerned, the trust which might otherwise exist is often lacking."

Because a Delegate is on the spot when crucial decisions have to be made he often has to act alone. If such a decision is acceptable to all parties on the waterfront then ipso facto, it is a 'good' decision from the viewpoint of the President and he will encourage such decisions. The same decision of a Delegate in slightly different circumstances can, however, fail to resolve or

can even exacerbate a conflict. Then a President will find himself called to a situation which has already been pre-empted and which might frequently have serious legal implications. An extract from the Minutes of an Executive meeting held on August 19th 1957 is not clear on the circumstances surrounding a decision of the Delegate, but records a Presidential rebuke:

"After hearing the facts of the case the Executive found the Delegate wrong in giving this decision. The Delegate was given a severe reprimand by the President in which he stated that the Delegate sometimes by his decisions causes trouble amongst the men and the Executive has to rectify his mistakes. In the future he must check more often with the President so he will know what's going on on the waterfront and won't be always in the dark. Also the President stated that the Executive will back the Delegate but they must know what his decisions are so they will know if they are right or wrong. If he has a difficult decision he must check with the President first otherwise he will not get any support..... This stems from a decision of the Delegate The decision almost caused the Union to pay the Blue Peter Steamship 23 hours wages for a single gang. Fortunately the Union did not have to, but by treating the ship like any other ship this would not arise again."

Conversations with the Delegate and President both confirmed the structural nature of conflict between these two roleholders and this was supported by evidence from the Union minutes. One of the first acts of a new President on taking office in 1949 was to invoke a disciplinary charge against the Delegate "for bringing disgrace on the Union by his dirty and untidy appearance

on the waterfront". There were men nearly fifteen years later who, because of the charge, still jokingly referred to the popular Delegate as "Dirty Jack". It was generally understood that such an action by the President served to make it known to the Delegate "who was boss of the Union" rather than to reflect any specific interest in grooming.

It thus happens that, because of this structural friction, a President finds himself at a double disadvantage in any dispute with management. Not only is it rare indeed for a President to be in at a crisis from the beginning, unlike managers or Superintendents with whom he will be called upon to discuss a situation; but he needs also to depend upon the Delegate for a reliable account of any occurrence. It is, however, by no means certain that the account he receives will be reliable since some unsuccessful action will already have been taken by the Delegate prior to the President's intervention. A President, therefore, faces in an enhanced form the common dilemma of supervisors in any bureaucracy: that information about problems is not passed upwards by subordinates until the problem reaches crisis proportions.

A second strain is inherent in the President's role. As political head of a democratically constituted organization he faces the liability of election every two years. This means he must try to maintain contact with his rank and file at the same time that his job isolates him from them. But as a direct result of this physical and resultant social isolation, a President is normally in no position to make

an approach to sizeable segments of the membership. It is only at general meetings held to acquaint the membership with the state of negotiations with employers that large attendances are found. Attendance on these occasions often amount to some ninety percent. But these are essentially unusual events. This is why the President, much more than the Delegate, is concerned about poor attendance at the routine and regular quarterly meetings when it is difficult to raise even a quorum of twenty members. When I was in the field, the President constantly complained of Union apathy as reflected in poor attendances. The Delegate, from his position in the Union's structure, was quite positive on the other hand that the membership was by no means apathetic. His every day was spent at the focal point of membership and management activity.

Perhaps the greatest strain facing a President arises from attempts to reconcile the political and legal aspects of his role. As we saw, a political head subject to election needs to secure as widespread a support as possible. At the same time, as an Executive vulnerable to the law he often has to make unpopular decisions which affect sizeable segments of the membership. Thus, after the 1958 lockout, managements were allowed by terms of a new contract, "the free and unrestricted use of mechanical equipment" and the management of one wharf accordingly felt free to introduce fork lift trucks. This action was bitterly resented by the men and all of them on that wharf - numbering 150 - walked off against the terms of

the contract and with the tacit support of the Delegate. The President charged all members concerned and the Executive convicted and fined them - after which all returned to work. This case (which is unrecorded in the Minutes) was often referred to as an example of the management orientation of the then President. Men who talked of the case - as they still did some five years after its occurrence - did not deny the legal rights of management or fail to understand the President's legal interpretation of the contract. They argued from a view of what they perceived as morally right, and to them moral values had precedence over legal ones. As one man expressed it after I had put the legal position of management/Union contracts, "I don't care what the law says. It is not right for them to grab even more money and put men out of work".

4. A Division of Values⁽²⁾

A President therefore, unlike a Delegate, finds himself in a situation comparable to that of many first line supervisors: his role involves the strain of attempting to reconcile two sets of contradictory values⁽³⁾. Men, concerned with moral questions of right and wrong, expect their elected President to follow their interests as they perceive them: they may be said to be "locally" and "morally" oriented. The President, however, must follow "cosmopolitan", "legal" values⁽⁴⁾, and is often perceived, therefore, by men as acting in ways indistinguishable

from a boss.

One of the few ways in which a President can deal with these opposing sets of values is by simple avoidance. When a new crisis breaks on the waterfront he can, and frequently did, make himself difficult to locate. A common grumble of most managers was that the President could never be obtained when a problem had to be referred to him. "He's impossible to contact when a decision is needed", said a manager of one of the larger wharves - a view often reiterated by other members of management. A frequent source of dispute between management and the Union - in the person of the Delegate - involves wet weather working⁽⁵⁾. When a vessel has only a few hours work prior to sailing and it begins to rain, management are naturally keen to continue working so the vessel may depart. There are no limits of acceptable rainfall that can be written into a contract, and disputes often occur over whether men should stop work or not. Men express their view in essentially moral terms and reinforce this by pointing to managerial criteria for stopping work which, they say, depends solely on whether cargo would be damaged by being unloaded in rain - irrespective of whether it is "right" that men should work in bad conditions. Men have observed that managements require the unloading of cars to continue, for instance, in what has been described as "near blizzard conditions", whereas in unloading foodstuffs - which are packed in light cardboard - they will stop in a light shower. "They think more of their fucking beans

than they do of us" was how one bitter skidsman expressed his view of management.

It is management's complaint that in cases of disagreement between the Delegate and Superintendent (which is invariable), a dispute should, following the contract, be taken to higher level - that of wharf manager and Union President - where the President could be made subject to legalistic arguments. Invariably, however, this kind of situation, typical to dock work where an on the spot decision is needed, would always, said management, founder because of the absence of the President.

The division of values, termed here legal and moral, and on which focusses so much Presidential role strain, is also found within the Executive. During fieldwork the legalists - in the persons of the President, Treasurer and Secretary - were referred to among the membership as "The Big Three" and the remainder of the Executive as "The Little Six". Members of the Union, as well as of the Executive's two sections, confirmed that the Executive had always contained two camps, though often known by different terms. One of the Big Three, who had been a member of different Executives for over six years, said "There's always an opposition on the Executive - they try to force the pace until they learn some sense". It was his experience, he stated, that divisions were along the lines of experience - "they don't know the limits and are hotheaded at first." It would appear, therefore, that segmentation along these lines is an institutionalised characteristic of L.S.P.U. Executive Committees.

During the period of fieldwork, divisions within the Executive were seen to be reinforced by the physical arrangement and use of office accommodation (see diagram, p. 8/17). Members of the Big Three would frequently lock the two doors A and B, and thus secure in Office Number 2, would discuss policy and tactics, while the other six members were isolated in Office Number 1. Within the locked security of their office, the three would also drink together, a practice which further emphasised their solidarity, and the isolation of the six since alcohol is formally forbidden on Union premises. This activity served too to bind the two legalists more closely to the President since it was he who always paid for the drink and who distributed it after the manner of outside men, as discussed in Chapter 7.

As well as these conflicts and the dilemmas which appear inseparable from a President's role, further problems arise from his limited control of patronage and of its allocation to legalists. Working members of the L.S.P.U. Executive enjoy relatively few perquisites of office, though in the barren economic climate of St. John's even small benefits represent relatively large additions to incomes rarely exceeding \$2,500. Accordingly, any patronage offered to legalists is seen as being at the expense of those moralists who fail to benefit. As an example, two legalists are annually selected by the President on no criteria other than his personal choice to superintend the annual issue of 'Union buttons'. These are membership

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THE LAYOUT OF OFFICE ACCOMMODATION WITHIN
THE L.S.P. UNION HALL

EXECUTIVE
OFFICE
NO. 2

B

(BIG 3)

EXECUTIVE
OFFICE
NO. 1

(LITTLE 6)

A

STAGE

L.S.P.U. HALL

badges certifying paid up status, and their issue takes place in a fortnight during the winter months. Thus, the two members involved receive about 90 hours pay at longshore rates - about \$200 - during a period of the year when work is at its slackest.

A more serious dichotomy arises within the Executive during periods prior to contract renewal. The President has power on these occasions to choose two Executive members to work with him who comprise the Union's Negotiating Committee and who are paid for their time. Such members are distinguished from their fellows firstly through the economic benefits of such selections: during difficult negotiations the payment of longshore rates on an hourly basis can amount to several hundred dollars. A second distinction derives from their position as negotiators which is seen to involve high prestige as being at the centre of affairs and through the possession of important knowledge about the stage of negotiations.

These powers of Presidential patronage - though small in absolute terms - can thus be regarded as important bases of potential cleavage within the Executive - particularly on those occasions when contracts are being renegotiated.

5. Political Process in the L.S.P.U.

So far we have emphasised structural constraints which act to inhibit political activity in the Union. But the Union's political life is dynamic and these

constraints can, in certain specific circumstances, be overcome. The pressures toward such ends are, not surprisingly, most manifest in periods prior to Union elections. To understand the processes which govern their removal, however, we must now consider Union structure in the context of two electoral conventions. Neither of these are formalised, but each has operated without exception. They involve firstly, a limiting of candidates for office to standing for only one post and secondly, acceptance of the idea of public Executive solidarity. Both conventions serve to increase the level of political activity and whereas physical and social limitations to interaction operate as a regular feature of longshore work, the conventions operate only in situations associated with Union elections.

In most Unions men may bid for one or several of the officerships and also for undifferentiated seats on the Executive Committee. By this means a man can multiply his chances of possible election. The L.S.P.U., however, has no undifferentiated seats on its Executive; each of the nine positions has a distinctive title which means in effect that all post holders are officers and each, in theory, has a function. Because Union tradition allows a man to contend for only one post, it therefore follows that he has only one chance of getting on the Executive. It further follows that a man with a body of support he feels is too small to secure his own election will be less inclined to risk his all on one throw. Nevertheless, he possesses

a valuable asset. If two or more such men can combine their support groups they can forward the campaign of one of them. The convention of one man to one post can be said, therefore, to encourage alliances and factionalism within the membership. In doing so, it reinforces the need for alliances derived from the essentially limited basis from which insulated contenders for office have to launch their campaigns.

The resultant political manoeuvring necessarily extends beyond regular gang members on large wharves to all categories of the membership. A successful campaign for Union office must be based not only upon a core provided from amongst men at a man's own workplace, but must extend also to wider segments of the membership.

A second convention acting to encourage periodic political activity is the traditional solidarity of the Executive. It is the normal practice in Unions for an Executive member who wishes to disassociate himself at a General Meeting from the policy of his colleagues, to step down from the top table and speak as an individual against official policy. In the L.S.P.U. the convention has always operated that such dissident voices must be publicly quiet. No Executive member has ever overtly disagreed with Executive policies at any meeting of the wider Union.

Such overt consensus proves functional both to dissident members and to the wider Executive itself. At the same time that it allows dissidents to plot in secret, they are also able to enjoy the valued prestige of office.

The wider Executive also gains since it cannot hope to pursue its policies without at least the appearance of consensus.

One effect of this conventional solidarity is the creation of alliances between dissident members of the Executive and seekers after office. Dissident Executive members who are predominantly moralists often have access to information which can embarrass legalists on the Executive. The tradition of public quiet means, however, that such information cannot publicly be used. Office seekers, on the other hand, have ability to speak at general meetings but lack access to information by which they can mobilise sizeable sections of the membership against the Executive. An alliance between a dissident Executive member and an office seeker can, therefore, prove complementary to both. It can lead the way to successful election for the office seeker whilst cleansing the moral reputation of an Executive dissident when Executive policies are unpopular: by linking two support networks behind each candidate in any forthcoming election it can thus enhance both men's chances of election.

Because an office seeker must obtain support beyond the boundary of his own wharf and occupational group, we have said that he must arrange his campaign around an issue that makes for maximum impact. Only one situation provides issues of this magnitude. Contract renewal negotiations involve a reconsideration of all substantive and procedural rules which govern all work conditions for all of the

membership. An office seeker, therefore, will aim to widen his support base by advocating popular membership policies for the Union to pursue in negotiations with employers, and by criticising the Negotiating Committee's handling of Negotiations. He will do this on the only occasions that provide him with an adequate audience - at general meetings called to discuss the state of Negotiations. A similar situation has been observed in another Union situation.⁽⁶⁾

It thus occurs that the main manifestation of division within Executives occurs during the crucial periods of contract renewal. With the President's selection of two legalists to form the negotiating committee, a battle for information then occurs between the Executive's two sides; legalists aiming to keep information from moralists; moralists seeking to gain it.

This restriction of information was justified when I was in the field on grounds of security. "They'll blab their mouths off", I was told by a legalist, "Everything will be back with the bosses in an hour".

Subsequent and separate conversations with members of the Big Three, however, made it apparent that desire to control information was concerned less with security than with the muzzling of potential opposition from linkages between Executive moralists and membership activists. Opposition to policies cannot be mounted when they are not fully understood: the attempt to withhold information about the inevitable shifts and vagaries of negotiations aimed, therefore, to limit the manoeuvrability of moralists

and activists in the forthcoming electoral skirmishes. At the same time the prestige of an Executive member is largely maintained by his ability to give out information when asked for it by the members. By restricting information, therefore, members of the inner three were in a position to reduce the prestige of their opponents in the outer six whilst simultaneously increasing their own.

Not surprisingly, moralists resent their lack of access to information, and especially was this evident during early negotiations with the employers in 1964. When one of the Little Six 'had liquor in him' he knocked roundly on the inner door of Office 2, and when it was opened swore at the Big Three within. "Why don't you tell us anything?" he said. "This is an executive of nine, not an executive of three." As negotiations proceeded the relationship between Inner Three and Outer Six became more strained, and this lasted until negotiations broke down and a lockout united all members of the Union behind the Inner Three.

6. A Faction Organises : The Case for Time and a Half Pay

We are now able to appreciate some events which occurred in 1956 and which were to have a marked effect on the subsequent history of the Union. These events focussed around a factional claim for time and a half pay for work done after six o'clock.

With Confederation as Canada's tenth province in 1949, the way was open for Canadian labour practices to appear on the Newfoundland scene. By the early 1950's, many

St. John's unions, unlike the L.S.P.U., had affiliated with labour organisations on the mainland. One of the results was that unions in St. John's tended to look for national comparisons when making a claim, whereas before Confederation their horizons had been limited to the local scene. An effect of the availability of wider comparisons and access to centralised services and personnel which affiliation permitted was that most unions in St. John's had, by 1954, succeeded in winning time and a half pay for overtime. During the relatively busy summer of 1954, the argument for comparability with other unions in the city was first raised on the waterfront amongst regular men at the Furness Withy Wharf - one of the largest in the port and one having a more regular basis of association than other wharves since much of its cargo came from the U.K. and was relatively less affected by winter closure of the St. Lawrence. Like other workers in the city who had succeeded in their claims, they believed that their work after 6 p.m. should also be paid for at time and a half rates. A differential of 20 cents was already paid for work after 7 p.m., and a successful claim for time and a half would have meant an addition to this of 47 cents an hour.

Pressure for time and a half mounted during 1954 and in the early part of 1955. By 1956 it was apparently one of the most discussed topics on the waterfront. It was a unifying object since its realisation was seen as affecting all equally; a gain for one group being seen as achievable

without being at the expense of any other. It appeared, however, a wellnigh impossible task to achieve in a situation of declining work without the unions giving up considerable concessions. It was known that the Executive, and particularly the President, were against making such a claim, whilst the Delegate was known to support the demand when the current contract ended on April 30th 1956. He had apparently been useful to the faction by canvassing support on all the wharves he served during the normal course of his duties. Thus, in 1955, prerequisites for factional action against the Executive were already present. Firstly, a factional core existed which had a grievance; secondly, this grievance was communicable because held in common by other groups who could, therefore, be recruited to swell factional numbers. Thirdly, one of the most important prerequisites for factional action - winning the Delegate's support - had already been accomplished. Only the final requirement - an overcoming of the physical separation of men divided by affiliation to their wharves - had to be overcome.

An important concern of factions is to have a moralistic voice on the Union Negotiating Committee. Since suspicion surrounds the legalistic President, it is ideal from their view if they are able to utilise the Delegate as a countervailing force. Early factional manoeuvring has often focussed on ensuring this balance of power.

In 1954 the Union Negotiation Committee which had met the employers comprised three members of the Executive,

plus the President and Delegate. This was the normal and usual constituency of a Union Negotiating Committee. In 1955 the Minutes record that at a General Meeting, "the Chairman asked permission that the same procedure re the selecting of a negotiating committee as done in the year previous be given, that is, that the Executive be given the power to select three (3) members of the Executive to work in conjunction with the President as a Negotiation Committee (one of the three Members to be the Recording Secretary)".

Thus the President, by suggesting that "the same procedure as done in the year previous", but without specifying the same officers, obtained authority from the body to pick a negotiating committee which excluded the Delegate.

In April 1956 the Contract, a one-year one, fell due for renewal. At the first General Meeting faction leaders who had planned the tactic beforehand sought this time to pursue their ends by ensuring that the Delegate was made a member of the Negotiating Committee. The Minutes record that the first item raised from the body which was proposed and seconded by regular men from Furness Withy was the following motion: "That a Negotiation Committee consisting of the Union President, Delegate (my emphasis), and Recording Secretary, plus two executive members appointed by the Executive, be empowered to negotiate a working contract."

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With the Delegate now on the Negotiating Committee the faction expected that he would be able to put forward their demand for time and a half in opposition to the President. The President and other legalists, however, isolated the Delegate from access to information about the negotiations. Thus, tactics before each confrontation with the employers were talked over between members of the Big Three, the Delegate being excluded from these informal and unofficial meetings. At meetings with employers he was not therefore in a strong position to make any positive contribution since he was not aware of his side's policy and could not speak out in case he revealed a split in Union ranks.

Though the Delegate was to some extent made redundant by this tactic of the Inner Three, he was not alone in resenting the aura of esotericism thus created. Members of the Little Six were similarly restricted in their access to information and similarly resented the impotency which this imposed. The Big Three was able further to restrict criticism of its tactics by the simple process of calling no general meetings during the first months of negotiations.

Pressure from the body was successful, however, in having a general meeting called and at this meeting, on 8 May 1956, the President explained the state of negotiations. In return for the possibility of time and a half the employers required a reduction in the size of gangs, the introduction and use of mechanical equipment (specifically the use of fork lift trucks), and an increase in the weight of cargo which derricks were allowed to hoist in a

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sling load. These proposals were regarded as imposing such a strong encroachment of conditions on work that they were unanimously rejected. It was decided to put the case to a conciliation board and the President of the Halifax Longshoreman's Union was chosen as the Union's representative. At this meeting one of the faction leaders proposed a ban on work after 6 o'clock in an effort to press the case for time and a half. The President had to point out that such action would be illegal; "Under the Federal Labour Laws if an eight-hour day was instituted by a union, an injunction could be placed against the union".

Feeling amongst the regular men, especially men at Furness Withy, however, was so strong that in defiance of both President and the employers the men at Furness Withy refused to work after 6.00 p.m.

This was the situation when the Halifax President arrived a week later to address the membership. The Minutes record that "Mr Campbell then said: 'My advice to you is that you give your negotiating committee full powers to effect a settlement, including a reduction in manpower and increasing of sling-loads.'" In what seemed a surprising about-turn, two faction leaders from Furness Withy then proposed "that the Union Negotiating Committee go back and get the best they can, bearing in mind the getting of time and one half". This was carried unanimously.

As a result of this motion the Negotiating Committee, in discussion with the Executive, decided to satisfy most of the employers' demands in return for time and a half.

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Two members at this Executive meeting mentioned "that several members had made it clear that in their, the members', opinion the agreement could not be concluded by the negotiating Committee until it was ratified by the body of the Union at a special meeting". This view was discussed, and the Minutes record, unanimously discounted. The Negotiating Committee met then with the employers and signed an agreement which obtained time and a half in return for most of the employers' demands.

What followed is subject to various interpretations. The facts are that at the general meeting called to give the membership details of the new agreement opposition to its terms was widespread. One faction leader said, "It's a bad mistake, we have taken a cut". Another remarked, "The contentious point with me is the two men lost". The Minutes record that another of the core of Furness Withy men then claimed, "that express permission was not given either to sign or not to sign". Two of these speakers were the proposer and seconder of the motion offered to the Executive on advice of the Halifax President. The Chairman insisted that the agreement was legally binding and that its non-ratification "could develop into an act that would not stand up if an injunction was placed against the Union and the issue brought to the Supreme Court by the employers". It was finally decided to hold a ballot and when this was counted it was found that 481 men rejected the new agreement in favour of the old, whereas 69 preferred the new. This 69, it was suggested to me, were believed to be mostly checkers

whose situation was hardly altered by the new agreement but who would lose by any work stoppage.

The Executive accepted the vote of rejection as a vote of no confidence and seven of nine members, including the President, resigned. The two remaining who had spoken out in the Executive Meeting formed a core of the new Executive comprising most of the men from Furness Withy who had acted as faction spokesmen from the floor. This new Executive then met the employers who agreed to rescind the new agreement and to operate as before under the terms of the previous contract.

7. Contract Renewals and Elections 1956-1968

With this background of structure and one detailed example of process we now come briefly to consider the subsequent history of the L.S.P.U.

In 1957 the contract again expired, but no elections were due to be held that year. The new contract, hardly different from the old, was signed with a minimum of negotiation and without pressure from factions in the membership.

The contract again became due for renewal in the following year, 1958, and negotiations continued up to May in that year when the Executive once more faced re-election. Pressure from factions for time and a half pay was once more mounted and the Executive in their turn pressurised the employers. The employers closed ranks,

called a lockout, and after six weeks the Union had to sue for terms. The new contract, in the words of the local Labour Relations Officer, "wiped the floor with the Union ". It scheduled dramatic cuts in gang size, did not grant time and a half pay for work after 6 o'clock and was, exceptionally, drawn up for a period of over three years, i.e. until the end of December 1961.

1959 was marked by both internal and external calm. The contract was not due for renewal, no elections were held and both the political life of the Union and relationships with employers were relatively uneventful.

The previous contract was still valid in 1960, and though an election was held in that year this excited little interest, seven of the nine incumbents being re-elected without any opposition.

In 1961 the previous contract was, again, still valid, no election was held, and the political life of the Union, like relations with employers, remained untouched by turbulence.

At the end of 1961 the three-year contract which had been signed in 1958, after the lockout, expired. Negotiations for the new contract extended to the period prior to the May election of 1962. Turbulence in the body of the membership again became manifest. Eight out of nine Executive positions were contested, including, for the first time, that of the Presidency. Although the President retained his seat in the new Executive, he found

himself with a minority Executive since five of his supporters failed to be returned. The five new members had conducted their election campaign by claiming that they would press for that old chestnut: time and a half pay after six o'clock.

1963 was a year between elections in which again the contract expired and needed to be renewed. Despite the professed policy aims of the new majority on the Executive, no pressure for time and a half was evident, and the new contract was signed in terms hardly different from its predecessor.

The following year, 1964, was a year in which both elections and the need for contract renewal once more coincided. Pressure from the body of the membership mounted for a complete revision of the terms and conditions of work, including, for the first time, claims for the abolition of the casual hiring system and its replacement by a rotationary scheme.

The President well realised that the Union was in little position to satisfy these claims. Pressed as he was between obdurate employers on the one hand and militant and widely supported factions on the other, he expressed his position to me by saying "There's a knife grinding on the inside and a knife grinding on the outside".

In an attempt to buttress his fading electoral chances the President became known as "soft for a handout"; in an attempt to secure votes in the forthcoming election

he became ready to dispense loans to longshoremen who asked for them. The funds for these loans were found to have been embezzled from Union funds, and the President one day disappeared, leaving the Vice-President in charge of negotiations. Pressure on the Executive continued and, as before, left it no room for flexibility in dealings with the employers. As in 1958, the employers once more presented a united front and declared a lockout. This lockout lasted for a year and resulted in a contract which, as in 1958, had a scheduled life of over three years.

The three years which followed the lockout, 1965-6-7, were marked by both internal and external calm. The contract was not due for renewal until 1968 and the election held in 1966 excited little interest. Two new members made an appearance on the Executive, but the majority of posts were uncontested.

1968, however, again provided a situation where both Union elections and contract renewal coincided. Turbulence in the membership became so enhanced that once more the Executive found itself quite unable to withstand the pressures. At the same time the employers were adamant in refusing concessions and, operating in a poor economic climate where further cost increases could not be passed on, were strongly united to oppose the Union. The Executive, realising the impossibility of their position, reacted as before and resigned whilst, as in 1956, two members formed the core of the new Executive.

CONTRACT RENEWALS AND UNION ELECTIONS 1956-68 AND
THE INCIDENCE OF INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL TURBULENCE

YEAR	ELECTION	CONTRACT RENEWAL		TURBULENCE	
				INTER- NAL	EXTER- NAL
1956	x	x	7 out of 9 Executive members resign	x	
1957		x			
1958	x	x	6 weeks lockout		x
1959					
1960	x				
1961		x			
1962	x	x	8 out of 9 seats contested. 5 Executive members removed	x	
1963		x			
1964	x	x	1 year lockout		x
1965					
1966	x				
1967					
1968	x	x	7 out of 9 Executive members resign	x	

The period (see Chart, p. 8/34) reveals five peaks of turbulence; in 1956, 1958, 1962, 1964 and 1968. The intervening years, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1966 and 1967 were, in comparison, relatively pacific. Turbulence is used here to define two types of phenomena.

Firstly, there is pressure from within the Union which had implications for the Executive. In 1956, and again in 1968, most of the members of the Executive resigned en bloc because they found the demands on them impossible to accept. In 1962 the Executive again reflected pressures from the membership when five out of nine of its members lost their seats in the elections.

A second type of turbulence again emerges from pressure of membership opinion, but this is directed through the Executive and onto the employers. It was the hard and intransigent bargaining of the Union, which was against Executive advice and in response to militant membership mandate, that led to the lockouts of 1958 and 1964.

It is evident that there is some kind of connection between 'internal' turbulence focussed on the Executive, and 'external' turbulence focussed on the employers. An examination of the chart reveals common denominators of these two types of activity. Thus, either internal or external turbulence is evident when two events coincide. This coincidence involves both elections and contract negotiations occurring in the same period. When this happened - as it did in each of the five years of crisis -

then the conditions exist for turbulence of one sort or another.

When either one of these events was absent the political processes were marked by calm. Thus 1957, 1961 and 1963 were all years when contracts required renewal and when no elections were held. Each contract was renewed without difficulty. Similarly, 1960 and 1966 were both years when contracts were not renewable, but when elections were held. Each of these elections attracted little interest or opposition, and the majority of the existing post-holders were returned without difficulty.

A brief examination of the recent history of the L.S.P.U., when taken on a year by year basis, can be said therefore to have revealed connections between two sets of events.

- 1) Internal political disturbance in the Union and acrimonious relationships with employers are not only related, but in a sense are substitutes for each other.
- 2) Such turbulence, whether internally or externally directed, requires the coincidence of two events occurring within the same period. These events, both of which represent crises for the Union, are contract negotiations and the imminence of Union elections.

8. Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter an attempt has been made to examine the background and structure to political processes which have occurred within the L.S.P.U. In particular, an attempt has been made to show how the dynamics of internal political actions are affected by the removal of constraints to emergence of factions.

We saw how the President, representing "cosmopolitan legal" values, works in harness with a delegate who is oriented to "local moral" values. These two value systems conflict and differences between them are revealed in the structural friction which is a marked feature of their relationship. This basic division of values was also seen represented in the Executive in terms of its institutionalised legalistic and moral segments, called in 1964 the Big Three and the Little Six.

The body of the membership, for most of the time, is not normally able to exert much pressure on the Executive. Its members are divided against each other by occupational status, area of residence, religion and place of work. But when communication barriers are removed, as in the period of contract renewal, and when a common and popular interest is promulgated, such as an aim to restore lost status, then factions can operate an influential lobby against the Executive and, particularly, by acting through the Delegate and the Executive's moral segment, aim to influence Union policy in negotiations with the employers.

Such influence, to be effective, requires a faction having access to information. There thus occurs a struggle for information between the two segments of the Executive. Moralists on the Executive cannot use their information about negotiations directly to embarrass the legalistic segment because the Union's tradition of corporate Executive responsibility prevents overt disagreement. Thus, an alliance is found necessary between moralists who have access, albeit limited access, to information but who cannot directly use it, and vocal faction leaders, who get information from moralists and who can and do use it at general meetings to influence policy and embarrass the legalists.

This political manoeuvring occurs within the context of two different types of crises. These occur when negotiations are in process for contract renewal and when the duo annual elections are imminent. The combination of both crises within the same period is usually marked by considerable political turbulence.

In such situations of dual crisis the special meetings called to discuss the state of contract negotiations allow also optimum conditions for militant office seekers in the body to mobilize cross wharf boundary factions. These factions may be said to be 'morally' based and locally oriented rather than 'legalistic' and cosmopolitan.

There has been considerable academic interest in and discussion of the concept of Union Democracy. Much attention has been paid to refining definitions which range

from "leadership responses to membership opinion" (Allen, 1954) and "the absence of oligarchy" and "presence of an institutionalised opposition" (Lipset Trow and Coleman, 1956) to "the existence of faction" (Martin, 1968). Most of these, on examination, appear to be less than explicit though Edelstein (1965) and Edelstein, Warner and Cook (1970) have supplied and used a model for examining a degree of democracy measured by the frequency incumbent candidates are defeated and the closeness of voting. There has been little discussion of any connection between Union democracy, however defined, and relations with management. Much attention has, however, been given to the particular nature of unions as a specialised type of organisation and some on whether indeed any useful purpose can be considered in claiming for any middle range classification at all.

When we consider the L.S.P.U. we see no institutionalised opposition and a leadership that varies in its response to membership opinion when pressured to do so by factions. Such responses, however, do not effectively extend to even wide sectors of the membership - as for instance outside men - and it positively discriminates against some categories such as bachelors and foremen. Nonetheless, some degree of responsiveness is evident on variable occasions. Irrespective of limitations provided by aspects of membership and structure, such as dispersal (Raphael, 1965) or apathy (Goldstein, 1952), or its electoral system, we yet find that a relative latency of

of responsiveness occurs when certain constraints are able to be removed and factions thereby are permitted to act. It is evident, therefore, that questions of factionalism, responsiveness and degrees of opposition must here be considered in a dynamic frame, and that the latency of Executive response be assessed in terms of features allowing the removal of constraints.

Whether these aspects of the L.S.P.U. are usefully transferable as components to a wider theory of Union democracy or organisation is, however, debatable. Just as there has not yet appeared an integrated body of theory of general application to organisations, so any overall consideration of unions as a sub type of organisation would seem to face similar problems. All unions appear and indeed are different; their social roles are directly related to the society in which they are set and many of their inherent features which have so far been selected for comparative analysis would seem the ones most variably affected by cultural influences.

Footnotes to Chapter 8

- (1) Cmd 8236/1951, Paras 15 and 18. "The Leggett Report", H.M.S.O.
- (2) A division of values as discussed here does not imply a lack of acceptance of the alternate value apparently foregone. Though values are graded, both sets in a division may be accepted though this is not done with equal preferment. See Firth (1964, p.221).

- (3) A theme common in anthropological literature - See Wallers, 1956 and Gluckman, 1969, as well as in more orthodox sociological studies emanating from the ideas of Max Weber on bureaucracies and usually concerned with the problems of foremen.
- (4) These terms are taken from Gouldner, 1957/8.
- (5) St. John's has an annual moisture precipitation of 56 inches compared to London's 25.
- (6) "Political discussion and conflict in the locals are not limited to campaign situations. The union has regular monthly membership meetings which are attended by most of the political leaders. Rank-and-file attendance at such meetings may vary from a few hundred to three or four thousand, depending on the issues up for discussion and the season of the year. The high figure is often reached at the meetings which discuss contract negotiations. The different parties and union politicians attempt to use these meetings to create issues. They may question an action of the president with regard to the handling of an overtime dispute, seniority, or some other grievance. The principal source of controversy, however, is the handling of collective bargaining or scale negotiations. While contracts usually last for two years, separate contracts are negotiated for the newspapers and commercial shops at different times, so that the local is involved in negotiations almost every year. The procedure followed during negotiations is quite prolonged. The administration begins by appointing a scale committee, which after drawing up the union's demands must submit the proposed contract to a membership meeting. Following the beginning of negotiations with the employers the scale committee must report back any agreement or change in union proposals to another meeting. The final contract must again be submitted. The opposition usually attacks the administration proposals and agreements. Often the issue is submitted to a referendum of the men in the shops.

Final settlement of union contracts usually occurs only after prolonged negotiations, often lasting half a year or more. During such periods, attendance at membership meetings runs into the thousands and special meetings to discuss the latest phases of negotiations are often called between the regular monthly meetings. Since these negotiations are also the lifeblood of union controversy and are of crucial importance to the members involved, the union is faced with a prolonged period of internal discussion and partisan controversy." (Union Democracy, 1962, pp. 74-75.) (Lipset, Trow and Coleman).

CHAPTER 9CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This thesis has principally aimed to show the connectedness between areas of enquiry that have often been marked off by sociologists into relatively closed compartments. In particular, the influence of kinship as this articulates with the world of work, and work roles, where these have linked with leisure activities, were demonstrated it is hoped to enhance the relative understanding of them all.

To social anthropologists, operating usually in a functional frame of reference and studying people of simple technology in compact residential units, the linkages between areas of life are often self evident and merit no especial emphasis. And coming from such a discipline to industrial sociology, a researcher finds that acknowledgement of linkages has been made - often vigorously - and indeed has often occupied the central interest of theorists from Marx and Engels to de Tocqueville and on. It is, however, in the minutiae of detailed observations; of fieldwork carried on in the modern tradition of anthropology, that we find a dearth. And where we do find detailed participant observation we find the researcher's central interest tending to be set firmly within one area rather than with a demonstration of linkages between areas.

An anthropologist is, therefore, likely to be surprised in reading Wilensky's classic article written

as late as 1960 in which he stated:

"... we need to blend a knowledge of economic institutions with an awareness of the flow of time. Writers in the sociology of work, industrial relations and stratification maintain a sensitivity to the economic order which students of family life and leisure often lose. Most of the studies of leisure concentrate on the residential community or some recreational activity within it (card-games, jazz, gardening, neighbourhood contacts, TV-viewing, parties, etc.) and thereby lose sight of the line of influence from economic system and workplace to leisure routine. Our job, again, is not merely to describe roles (worker, husband, guest) or explain variations in interpersonal relations in little grouplets (work crew, family, party), but to see the connexions between them and thereby construct a more complete picture of what other disciplines view as a residual 'social context' or 'social environment'.

On the other hand, students of leisure and family life are usually alive to the flow of time - life cycle for the person, a changing kinship system for the society - which sometimes escapes students in the other areas. A man's current job, his immediate work situation, place of residence, even his class position, while they count for something, tend to be ephemeral. This is true even if one's time perspective stretches only two or three generations. Yet I know of no systematic studies which focus on the interdependence of behaviour and attitude in the separate spheres of modern society over the life span of the person - interlocking cycles of work, family life and consumption, and community participation."

In part, the specialisation within sociology is reflected in the points discussed in Part 1 of Appendix 1, and arises from industrialism's separation of work - spatially and often socially - from other aspects of life. It is also due in part because "going native" is often onerous and expensive - particularly in time, and the skills for this kind of research are not widely taught. Perhaps the greatest cause of "one sphere" research in industrial

sociology arises, however, because it appears to the sponsors of research in industrial milieux, who are for the most part concerned to finance "consultancy research" which at least provides quick answers to specified questions.

A study of St. John's longshoremen was, in a sense, an ideal focus for an anthropological enquiry into an industrial situation. It would be expected that connections between spheres should be evident where the people studied are self contained, relatively few in number and - because of the nature of their job - relatively isolated within the wider society in which they live. Because of this it is not too difficult, in taking what may be a highly atypical industrial situation, to demonstrate obvious linkages. By doing so, workers in more complex industrial situations may then come to appreciate, in kinship for instance, an extra variable in their analyses of industrial affairs. In the same manner specialists in kinship and family can be made aware of a cyclical process outside the family which parallels, influences and is influenced by a similar cycle within it. In these senses the "fit" of connections is fairly evident and can be said to have demonstrated integral articulation across several spheres. At other levels of analysis, however, the fit is not so evident and the common problem of incorporating change is one not readily reconciled.

One aspect of this is provided by the classic anthropological problem of incorporating change in what is essentially a static view derived from field work occurring

at one point in time. A good example here is seen from the treatment of "career" which could only be accommodated dynamically by extrapolating from figures of ages and incomes as these were obtained for one year. This is a problem that occurs in various forms throughout the analysis and one which is only partly overcome by cross checked conversation and observation.

Throughout the study of kinship as this is treated in the thesis, much reliance had necessarily to be placed on reported rather than observed occurrences, and because of the constraints of fieldwork this does not readily compensate for the lack of firm statistical backing for developmental cycle sequences. Fieldwork constraints too, limited the treatment of family social organisation largely to its operation within the nuclear base, and emphasises the need for further research into the relationship between nuclear families as "kinship" is more usually interpreted by anthropologists. The important linkage between this wider view of kinship and the sphere of work was illustrated by the importance on the dock of the father/son-in-law relationship. It would be useful in this context to know more, for instance, of the relationship of cousins on the dock; if differences occurred between different varieties of cousin and whether parallels to the antagonism of brothers were reflected in the junior generation.

In the study of religion as this is treated in the thesis, we again find a difficulty in accommodating the element of change. Since most informants were in their forties and fifties, and recruitment to the Union had ceased

several years prior to fieldwork, it was not possible to account for differences in the religious bonding of your people in St. John's society, though this had undoubtedly occurred since Confederation and the intrusion into Newfoundland of N. American influences. The role of pious women, as providers of family insurance services and of the means of social mobility for children, whilst offering an interesting and unusual linkage of religious and secular values, is again limited by being restricted in time to the senior generations of women. If secularization has proceeded since Confederation, we need to know how younger women adapt to the insecurities and restrictions derived from a husband's erratic and low class occupation and of how this varies between the pious and the less than pious.

In the study of work gangs, Union organisation and industrial relations, the joint problem of social change and the intrusion of environmental influences are paramount and raise questions that the constraints of method and fieldwork were unable to answer. What is needed, if data could be made available, is an assessment of the impact of federal labour legislation on the pattern of disputes before and after Confederation; of how this affected the position of gangs and their members within the overall Union rubric and of how it affected relationships within the Employers Association.

In the study of pilferage it proved possible, without working in the gangs, to obtain details of technique and to deduce how these influenced relationships. Through cross

checking, what may hopefully be considered a viable system was constructed that appears to articulate with other work and non work activities. It is here, however, that gaps in the analysis become evident. In particular, the relationships of a gang to their foreman - who from all accounts does not participate in pilferage - would be expected to involve a foreman in an enhanced variety of role strain. If foremen allow men to pilfer as part of an indulgency pattern or as an aspect of exchange for satisfactory output, they place themselves in an extremely vulnerable situation vis-a-vis management. It is regretted that the techniques/^{by}which foremen safeguard their situation were not obtained, but the questions this raises also involve discussion of the relatively enhanced solidarity that participation in pilferage would be expected to provide for gang members. This in its turn raises the question of comparability between gangs as measured by different criteria - an area which unfortunately had to be largely ignored.

APPENDIX 1FIELDWORK PROBLEMS AND METHODS : THE DILEMMA OF THE
INDUSTRIAL ANTHROPOLOGIST1. General Problems

When an anthropologist enters the field, he has traditionally been expected to collect data on "the whole" social life of the people concerned. The justification for this view of his task was expressed by Evans-Pritchard when he stated, "It is impossible to understand clearly and comprehensively any part of a people's social life except in the full context of their social life as a whole" (Evans-Pritchard, 1951).

When an anthropologist carries out an occupational study - that is to say, when he examines the social relationships of people linked by occupation within a society marked by extreme specialisation - he finds the traditional anthropological approach difficult to follow. This is a fact of fieldwork derived from the constraints of the field situation, and owes nothing to the dogmas of conceptual frames which he may adopt. Merely by choosing an occupational group as his area of study instead of a group united by residence and kinship, he finds that he has automatically limited opportunities for the collection of his data. There are at least two aspects to this limitation, and though their equivalents are by no means absent in orthodox

anthropological studies they are particularly enhanced in the type of study under discussion. These constraints are firstly, those likely to derive from the antagonisms of industry, and secondly, those arising from the common separation of work from other aspects of social life; such separation may be physical, social or both. These constraints will now be considered, firstly in a general context and secondly as they specifically operate within the port of St. John's.

a) The Antagonisms of Industry

Despite many managers' view of industry as a milieu where the interests of workers and management are held in common, the reality of industrial organisation shows this to be far from the case. Managers who follow a 'harmony of interests' ideology have frequently found difficulty in reconciling the behaviour of their workpeople who act in opposition to this approach. They have had to fall back on explanations for such behaviour that embrace either variants of a conspiracy theory of industrial relations or, and sometimes in association with, emphases concerned with defective personal relations. Such reconciliations are then seen to concern themselves with questions of morale or with defective systems of communication. As has been often pointed out, more recently by Fox, the harmony view of industry "has long since been abandoned by most social scientists as incongruent with reality and useless for purposes of analysis" (Fox, 1966).

The reality of industrial organisation - certainly of large-scale industry and particularly in dockwork - recognises that in many areas of interaction both management and labour are structurally determined antagonists, and that instead of one power centre, there are thus at least two.

A single anthropologist working on his own in this field is immediately faced, therefore with problems which are extremely difficult to surmount. If he aims to understand a wide context of his subjects' relationships he should at least be concerned to examine who and how they relate to when carrying out their occupational roles. Specifically this means associating not only with workers and their representatives but also with managers and theirs. Because industry, however, is marked by antagonism rather more than it is by harmony, he is likely to find such "visiting" suspiciously interpreted by both sides. He is further likely to find that rapport with one party can only be obtained at the expense of rapport with the other. In this situation an anthropologist has consciously to choose, therefore, to collect his data in one area, knowing full well that this is likely to hinder (at best) his collection of data in other areas. The degree to which this occurs can be understood as a product of the degree of hostility existing between the two sides and of how far both parties understand and accept the role of social investigation.

Tom Lupton (1963) has reported a study where both sides accepted his role and where he moved easily between

management and workers. This approach is unlikely to succeed, however, where the level of conflict is high. Karsh (1958) in his participant study of a strike, for instance, necessarily reported the dispute from one side only - in his case the unions. Though participant observer studies of strikes have been made encompassing both sides these have not, as far as the author is aware, been made in situations employing only one field worker. Thus Gouldner's (1965) classic account of a dispute in a gypsum mine was essentially a team study.

This dilemma is not, of course, unknown to anthropologists working in more usual milieux. All societies are to some extent marked by mutually distrusted divisions. The point to be emphasised, however, is that there are less cross-cutting ties in a divisive industrial setting and that this is likely to produce particular problems for an anthropologist in such a field.

This problem as it faces an anthropologist in the industrial field, therefore, is part of a wider problem concerned with the drawing of boundaries. Since in these circumstances it appears impossible to carry out a study of the full context of social relationships, at what point does an anthropologist draw the line? This aspect of industrial studies in societies marked by a considerable division of labour is different only in degree rather than in kind from the problems now increasingly faced also by orthodox anthropologists. They too must increasingly consider limits which they must set to collect data on

matters which impinge upon the relationships of their subjects. Are they, for instance, to consider the village as their bounded area of enquiry or must they extend their interests beyond their traditional limits to cover the influence of, say, wider administrative structures? This dilemma, the making of an either/or decision is, therefore, part of the wider problem of boundary allocation increasingly being faced by all anthropologists. It can, however, be considered at its most extreme in industrial studies since these are invariably set in a milieu at best of distrust and at worst of open hostility.

b) The Physical and Social Separation of Work from Other Aspects of Social Life

Work in 'complex' societies is carried on in specific areas which are usually distinct from areas of residence. This itself makes for difficulties in following the old precept of a full contextual study since men who work in a dock, a factory or a store, though interacting in one spot at one time, may well disperse at the end of the shift, the shift or the season, to homes in various parts of a town or even to more separated areas of a wider region. This situation is, of course, in marked contrast to that position found in the more usual anthropological fields, where all aspects of social life tend to take place in a restricted area that is then relatively easy for one researcher to encompass in the normal course of fieldwork.

A further problem facing the 'industrial anthropologist' which is less likely to trouble his more orthodox counterparts, arises from the lack of observable connection between work and other roles in industrial society. Thus, the roles which men occupy outside the workplace are rarely seen as evident in affecting the order of relationships within it. This is not to suggest that such articulation of roles does not occur⁽¹⁾, nor that they do not often mutually influence each other; this is most obviously not the case. What is the case, however, is that they are not necessary for the organisation of work tasks in industrial society and that, therefore, such articulation may be considered less visible in the industrial milieu than outside it. Though, for instance, kinship relationships are commonly understood to be important in dockwork (Liverpool University, 1954) and in mining (Dennis et al, 1956), the social organisation of such work is not seen to be based on, or specifically to exploit, principles of kinship organisation or demonstrably to affect the way in which such work is ordered. It is much more difficult, therefore, to appreciate the influence of, say, kinship variables, when watching men unload a boat or dig for coal, than in watching shepherds tend their flocks (Campbell, 1964) or pastoralists control their family herds (Gulliver, 1955).

It is perhaps because of these limitations that the wider ranging approach of the social anthropologist has hardly been exploited in industrial studies. This has partly been due to the anthropological tradition which sees

the research worker as an isolated individual, which necessarily restricts his work in industrial work milieux where strong divisions exist, and it is partly due to the sociological tradition which normally eschews wider contextual research.

The result of these traditions as they have affected industrial studies is twofold. Firstly, isolated anthropologists (and anthropologically oriented sociologists), though increasingly studying complex communities, have tended to ignore the specifically industrial occupational scene or, where they have so ventured, participant observation has been restricted to the work aspect of relationships and secondary sources used to give background on topics such as community and family⁽²⁾. Secondly, sociologists, coming increasingly to appreciate the benefits of intensive fieldwork - of participant observation - and being more aware of the benefits of team ventures, have been able to observe situations where the actors are structurally divided. At the same time, their interests have if anything tended even more to be restricted to the workplace and to have ignored or only cursorily to have treated workers' roles outside. There are noted exceptions to this pattern, but the general treatment, while often playing lip service to wider conceptual enquiry, has nonetheless been workplant based.

It is suggested for studies of industrial relationships to reach the degree of comprehensiveness and rigour found in the best of modern social anthropological monographs,

that two developments are required. Firstly must come a greater use of intensive fieldwork methods (together with the more formal and usual sociological modes of enquiry) allied at the same time to the use of teams to ensure a wider contextual analysis of relationships as these are articulated inside and outside work plants. Such teams would also aid in overcoming the structural antagonisms often found between the two sides of industry.

2. Fieldwork Problems and Methods in St. John's

In outlining the methods by which information was obtained and the problems which had to be overcome, I can do no better than accept the guide in Chapter 1 of Firth's 'We, The Tikopia':

"It is a matter of common agreement among modern anthropological field-workers that an account of the institutions of a native people should contain some description of the methods by which the information was obtained. This is in accordance with the recognized logical position that even the simplest record of what purports to be the "facts" of a native culture has involved a considerable amount of interpretation, and every generalization about what the people do has meant a selection from the immeasurably wide field of their activity, a comparison of items of individual behaviour. The conditions of the selection - that is, the situation of the observer in regard to the material - should therefore be indicated. In terms of anthropology, it is desirable to make clear such points as: the relation of the investigator to other folk of his own culture, whether isolated from them or in daily contact; the linguistic medium of communication with the natives, whether the vernacular, a "pidgin" or other lingua franca, or translation by interpreters; the economic and social medium - payment, in money or kind, services rendered, goodwill,

or simple gossip and conversational exchange; the nature of the record, whether accounts of eye-witnesses, or hearsay evidence, or personal observation of the investigator himself; whether what is described is current practice or is now obsolete; and the range of instances relied upon for generalization. Elaborate documentation of every single statement is impossible in the space available, but some general reference is necessary." (Pirth, 1936, pp. 2-3.)

In all I made three visits to Newfoundland. The first extended from August 1962 to January 1963. I then returned to the U.K. to attend the University of Manchester and the London School of Economics until the following July. From July 1963 to September 1964 was again spent in St. John's and this was followed by a short stay of four days in 1966.

Besides the general problems already discussed, there initially existed considerable barriers to rapport which restricted collection of orthodox data until well into the second visit. When I first arrived in the field I was told my appointment had been remarked upon by a man with nearly twenty years experience of longshore labour. He had reportedly said "You'll find him in the harbour with a knife in his back!" Though this was an extreme statement of expected attitudes, the reality of early experiences could not be described as cordial.

One of the first problems derived from the body sponsoring my fellowship - The Newfoundland Institute of Social and Economic Research as being associated with the University. Unfortunately, the University of Newfoundland

was regarded as Joe Smallwood, the Provincial Premier's especial interest. Smallwood's government was hardly popular with the Island's labour at that time. A logging local had been decertified; there had been rioting in the woods and a member of the R.C.M.P. had been killed in one of the resulting disturbances. One contributing cause of most of this furore was a piece of Provincial labour legislation not affecting longshore work in the Province, which was held to be extremely "anti labour" and which had been strongly criticised by the Canadian Labour Congress. As I found out later in the fieldwork, my association with the University and the patronage affecting many Government and other posts in the Island convinced most longshoremen that, as one expressed it, I was "Joey's stool". My "Government" appointment to enquire into the activities of longshore labour was thus regarded as firm evidence that Smallwood was aiming to extend his baleful influence into their sphere.

It was, accordingly, early made clear that the Union's formal cooperation, whilst not being actively refused, would be extremely restricted. I was, however, despite several members' representations to the President, allowed to use the Union Hall and could walk on the wharves and drink in the taverns. These activities were carried out, however, in an atmosphere of antagonism. Whilst only a few longshoremen could be described as actively hostile, most Union members merely ignored me.

It was in November 1962 that an act of alcoholic bravado had repercussions that fortunately lasted for

some of these difficult weeks. One evening in a tavern, a large and rather drunk longshoreman announced to the gathering what he intended to do to me. As he came closer, I warned him to be careful of what he did - was he not aware that I was a red belt judoka? He decided to rethink his proposal and weaved away. I decided not to explain that a red belt is worn by tyros to judo; it provides visible warning to other practitioners to be extra careful of the wearer, since if thrown he would not even know how to fall! From that time on there was a lack of physical threats.

Besides the problem of a lack of acceptable role at this time, the lack of a residential base was also serious. Longshoremen lived in streets surrounding the harbour but in no particular concentration. I had intended to lodge with a longshore family but this proved impossible except for a period of one month, as described in Chapter 3. Instead I lodged in a succession of boarding houses close to the waterfront but lacked any residential, or indeed other, contact with longshoremen's families.

In attempting to follow the precepts of participant observation, I also aimed to obtain work on the waterfront. This proved impossible, partly because the idea of an outsider working in the gangs was too alien for men to accept and partly because, in support of this, the Union restricted work to Union members. As I later came to realise, with the chronic shortage of work in the port it would, in any case, have been folly to be seen working through a preferential

arrangement when work was so scarce. When I later knew something of the nature and degree of covert work activity I knew that this too was a further reason why I was refused entry to the gangs as a participant. As a result I neither was able to work nor/^{later} sought to work in the gangs throughout the whole of fieldwork.

Towards the end of this first field trip, I had begun to make some contacts and knew three of the most marginal longshoremen - the outside men. Through gossip over beers that I bought I was able to gain some insights into problems of casual labour as these affected the least privileged. I realised, however, that much of this information was probably suspect and the gaining of it not calculated to ease relationships with regular longshoremen. They saw outside men as a submerged class and my contacts branded me as an associate of men who bore grudges against the Union and a system through which they failed to benefit.

In January 1963 I returned to the U.K. During six months' fieldwork I had met only three longshore wives and very few children; had attended no family gatherings; knew little of how work was organised in the gangs and had failed to break through the hostility of the most of the Union's membership.

In July 1963 I returned, without enthusiasm, to Newfoundland and again attempted, without success, to lodge with a longshore family. In an attempt to counter the still present rumour that I was "Joey's stool" and to

provide an acceptable role I emphasised that my affiliation was, not to Newfoundland's University but instead was to London University and concentrated on the role of a detached and impartial observer. This concept was, of course, outside the experience of most of my subjects and, not surprisingly, was received where it was listened to at all with at most a tolerant and usually a silent scepticism.

After three weeks my landlord, who was not a longshoreman, said he had heard that the waterfront was "buzzing" with a story that I was an insurance spy checking on pilferage in the port; my London affiliation was merely a cover and was not to London University but to Lloyds of London. Later I found that a rumour had come, allegedly from one of the company offices, that a private detective was at work in the port but nobody had actually been approached and management denied this. It was at this time too that I was confronted in the Union Hall with being a Communist spy, sent to obtain details of the vital strategic role played by the Port of St. John's in defence of the free world. It is interesting in retrospect to realise that these rumours run parallel to witchcraft accusations as representing aspects of strain and fear within the longshore world.

By this time I had retreated somewhat from burdensome attempts to foist myself on people who had no desire to communicate. Much time was spent at the University situated in the new part of town away from the waterfront reading

literature on docks and industrial sociology. In the evenings I socialised with members of the University and with the hospitable Jewish community. It was at this time too that I contemplated altering my project and seeking permission of the Institute to abandon the longshore study and concentrate instead on the Jewish community with whom rapport was so obviously easier. In this I was fortunately dissuaded by the Institute's Director, Ian Whitaker, after discussion with Dean H.O. Morgan and I decided to give the longshore project a further trial.

I was fortunate at this time in one respect and was able to move into a small boarding house that had a friendly outside man as one of its residents and through him was beginning to extend my contacts at that level. Though there seemed little chance at that time of mixing with what can be called the Union's "middle range" - the regular gang members - I decided to renew contacts with the Union's top level. In early and mid-August I, therefore, made attempts to entertain members of the Union Executive, particularly the President. By this time, through my academic reading, I knew something of dock labour problems and felt able to offer something in discussion. I realised too that my own experiences as a Union branch Chairman and Secretary could be useful assets that had been relatively unexploited. Accordingly, I was particularly pleased when the President agreed to call for a drink at a flat I had borrowed from an absent colleague. He came, and whilst we talked an

American colleague, a Professor of English, called in, was introduced, talked a while and departed.

Some days later, I was appalled to find that my American colleague, driven beyond endurance by a year of non North American efficiency and infuriated by a hold up to his car in the St. John's dock, had written a letter to the St. John's Telegram (19 August 1963). With considerable eloquence he attacked the Port and particularly its longshoremén.

"AFRAID OF THE RAIN.

Sir: My year in St. John's provided ample evidence that Newfoundland, despite the kindness and friendliness of its good people, has some definable difficulties. Most of these are minor - simple, testimonial of an historically isolated people trying to catch up at once, if not sooner, with a fast moving technological world. But your longshoremén are something else again, in terms of current society. They are Neanderthals, but of a special breed, hardy and tough Newfoundlanders afraid of a bit of rain.

This is not a blast at unions, at least not those which conduct their affairs with intelligence and responsibility. I saw what desolate things can be done to non-unionized workers in Detroit in 1930. I have held a card in good faith in the hod-carriers union in Chicago. I think unions of the right kind are the working man's only chance against the rapacities of large employers. But Mr. Breen's little group do not qualify as intelligent and responsible men. They are totally indifferent to the public service which is the final reason and foundation of their work. They are obstructionists, a hundred years behind the times.

On Aug. 10 my auto was to be shipped for arrival in Halifax Aug. 12, but Newfoundland men, famous in song and sage for courageous tussles with the violent seas refused to load a cargo requiring only a few hour work. There was threatening them some rain falling on the piers. Longshoremén all over the continent work cheerfully in rain, but not in St. John's harbor.

My auto will arrive three days late, my schedule is seriously disrupted; my useless stay

in Halifax is costing me a sizable amount of money. Moreover, I was warned by the shipper to leave not so much as five cents worth of moveable property in my car or it would be stolen. I understand that St. John's harbor is noted wherever ships sail for petty thievery, panhandling, absolute indifference to service, "pinkie" by the gallon, and open public nuisances on East Water Street (the last two in logical order). It is general knowledge that as a harbor, St. John's is the most backward, inefficient, and disliked port on the east coast of all North America, and all the impressive physical harbor improvements will mean exactly nothing until Mr. Breen's raindrop boys choose to join the 20th Century.

Why doesn't that high-powered politician in the Confederation Building try to do something constructive about this? No one else seems able to.

Yours, still in Halifax,

P. J. ALDUS

August 15, 1963."

If this letter were associated by the President with me, any attempts to study longshoremen would certainly be doomed. I decided to write an immediate reply, saw the President in his office, suggested the letter be answered and produced my draft which was published the next day.

"SAYS CRITICISM IS UNFAIR AND UNTRUE.

Sir: The tirade against St. John's longshoremen by Mr. P. J. Aldus in your paper of August 19 deserves to be answered.

August 10, the day Mr. Aldus' car was due to be shipped, was one of the wettest days on record for the month of August. (1½" of rain fell in the six hours from 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. - or one fortieth of the average total rainfall in St. John's for a complete year). "Longshoremen all over the continent work cheerfully in rain, but not in St. John's" says Mr. Aldus. This is certainly open to dispute, but there is little doubt that Mr. Aldus himself would not be cheerful for very long if he had to work without shelter in rainfall as heavy as it was on August 10.

Mr. Aldus' other criticisms of the mass of St. John's longshoremen are both unfair and untrue. Every man who swigs "Pinkie" on East Water Street is not necessarily a longshoreman. I know many

longshoremen and I know them well. They are mostly family men, trying to earn a decent dollar like anyone else. Let us be careful Mr. Aldus, before we again condemn whole groups of people, and if we do so let us be sure that our facts are correct.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD MARS

August 20 1963,
5 Carter's Hill,
St. John's, Nfld."

It was this reply which marked the turning point in efforts to become accepted. Men stopped me in the Union Hall and in the street and expressed surprise that a "limey" should defend their interests. Because of this marked change within "the Body" (as the membership was referred to) members of the Executive became more affable, and since they were members of regular gangs this eased the way into knowing and talking with their workmates.

It was during this period that meetings began with the employers to re-negotiate the contract - due to expire at the end of 1963. I approached both employers and the Union; asked to attend their joint meetings and this was agreed by both sides. Though my relationships with the Executive were becoming more cordial there was still considerable resistance within the Body. One longshoreman in the Union Hall during October 1963 said to me "Who are you? Breen (the President) might trust you - but I don't!" This still represented a widespread view and because of this Executive members I knew thought it politic to exclude me from General Meetings.

This situation continued until the turn of the year when, with negotiations showing every sign of becoming

deadlocked; the employers decided that one factor contributing to the potency of the Union's arguments might be derived from me: they, therefore, refused my entrance to the joint meetings. When this became known to the Body, my acceptance was near complete. My main contacts on the Executive who comprised the Inner Three, decided it would be a suitable occasion to propose my attendance at General Meetings. This was then put to the membership and on January 18th 1964 was accepted unanimously. On reading the Minutes I found I had been fully incorporated with the Irish name "Maher".

Two months later I was able to obtain a flat close to the waterfront. Here I brewed "home brew" beer at the rate of about 100 bottles a week and it became known that there was always a drink to be had at the flat. Through entertainment I was able really to know a range of longshoremen and made good friends with some who had originally been strong opponents. By this type of contact, rather than through actual work in the gangs, I was able to obtain considerable data which was then cross-checked from several sources.

Whilst the use of a flat for entertainment had distinct advantages and expanded my range and depth of contacts it opened few avenues to longshore families and wives. There is thus an area of enquiry that was relatively neglected and this is one normally considered integral in anthropological studies. Longshoremen normally live work and social lives marked by separation from their families, as Chapters 2 and 8 demonstrate. Family activities

would, therefore, have been a difficult avenue to explore even in ordinary circumstances. Being both a bachelor - and therefore regarded as sexually dangerous to womenfolk - and a Jew as well - provided further problems that were difficult to surmount.

One of the advantages in being a Jew, however, was a perceived non-alignment with either of the main religious groupings. Accordingly, both Catholics and Protestants were relatively freer in discussion of religious differences than would otherwise have been the case.

Negotiations with Employers continued through the various stages until these were exhausted, and on 23 April 1964 the Employers declared a lockout and the Union countered with a strike by which they blocked the sheds and picketed to prevent the cargoes already stored there being unloaded. The Union Hall became the focus of longshore activity and I spent considerable time ferrying 'home brew' beer there.

With the membership effectively focussed on one spot it was a good opportunity to design and administer the questionnaire at Appendix 3. This was answered by:

5	Winchmen
11	Boldsmen
4	Fork Drivers
1	Signaller
2	Skidsmen
10	Stowers
6	Hatch Checkers
6	Foremen
22	Shed Checkers and
14	Outside Men

Total -	81
---------	----

In the circumstances of a strike it was not possible to aim for any sophisticated sampling and the survey must be regarded as essentially a haphazard sample; its data accordingly must be viewed as supportive rather than definitive and this is how it has been interpreted in this thesis.

One unusual aspect to data collection and its verification derived from the telephone. Since most longshoremen possess telephones but are poor correspondents, I was able, at some admittedly considerable expense, to check items of information by telephoning from London. This proved invaluable in the final stages of preparing this report.

APPENDIX 2THE CAREER OF LONGSHOREMEN : INCREASING AGE
AND DECLINING EARNINGS

In common with other manual workers, the earnings of St. John's longshoremen tend to be at a peak during the early years of their working life⁽¹⁾ and to show a marked decline as physical strength wanes at middle age. This descent in earnings continues until longshoremen are regarded as unsuited to the rigours of longshore work when they are referred to as "derelict" or "burnt out".

Records of earnings in 1963 were obtained for 422 married⁽²⁾ longshoremen, of whom 319 were regular gang members and 103 outside men. The median earnings of all married regular men were as follows:

CHART 1

<u>Age range</u>	<u>Nos. of Men Involved</u>	<u>Median Earnings</u>
25 - 29	3	1,400
30 - 34	16	2,103
35 - 39	39	2,354
40 - 44	50	2,266
45 - 49	55	2,242
50 - 54	76	2,212
55 - 59	40	1,943
60 - 64	32	1,865
65 - 69	4	1,861
70 - 74	4	-

It will be observed that the range of median earnings shown here is not very wide, though it does, as expected, reflect a general downward trend. These figures, however, refer to all married regular gang members and therefore include men in all occupational categories within the gangs. It is, however, commonly understood on the waterfront that as men become older and less suited to the rigours of the hold they move to the relatively easier work of the shed. At the same time, being less fit than younger men, they tend not to be hired so often on the casual occasions when they shape up for other foremen and they tend to lose more work through sickness. The operation of these factors is clearly revealed by the following analysis of the median age and earnings of hold and shed men when compared in six gangs - the three highest earning gangs being taken from each of the two main wharves⁽³⁾.

CHART II

<u>Gang</u>	<u>Median Hold Age</u>	<u>Median Pay</u>	<u>Median Shed Age</u>	<u>Median Pay</u>
A	39	2,533	50	2,477
B	41	2,549	50	2,417
C	37	2,310	43	2,027
D	41	2,529	51	2,382
E	42	2,469	44	2,972
F	54	2,348	51	2,675

These figures show the holdsmen's median age to be up to eleven years younger than that of stowers and their earnings to be higher. Gang F was exceptional in that the median age of its stowers was lower than that of its holdsmen, but here too age was decisive in securing the younger age group a higher median differential of over £300.

We are thus able to appreciate some of the financial implications of growing older as this affected men in regular gangs. We see that overall they earned less the older they became, but that a plateau in earnings existed from about the age of 40 to the mid 50's. Thereafter the decline in earnings becomes steeper.

So far the analysis has been concerned only with married men who are members of regular gangs. But regular gang members suffer a further insecurity. As they become older they are likely to lose their position in a regular gang and thereby suffer a heightened liability to become outside men. In 1964 nearly one quarter of the total of 422 married longshoremen were outside men but this proportion was over-represented in the higher age groups as follows:-

CHART III

Age Group	R.M.	O.M.	TOTAL	% of Outside Men in each age group
30 - 34	16	11	27	41
35 - 39	39	8	47	17
40 - 44	50	14	64	22
45 - 49	55	16	71	23
50 - 54	76	22	98	22
55 - 59	41	13	54	25
60 - 64	32	20	52	39
65 - 69	4	2	6	33
70 - 75	4	2	6	33
TOTALS	319	103	422	24

With the exception of the youngest age group we see that up to and including their 50's, the proportion of outside men to total men in each age group approximated to the overall percentage of outside men in the labour force. With the approach of his 60's, however, a man's chances of remaining in a regular gang sharply declined. In the 55 - 59 age group 75% of men were in regular gangs: in the 60 - 64 age group the figure had declined to 61%.

Chart III also reveals that most men ceased work after passing the age of 64. In the 60 - 64 age group the number of men working longshore was little different from the number in the preceding five-year age group - both

groups each contained just over 50 men. Once the 65 age mark had been passed, however, this figure dropped by 88%.

When a man lost the security of regular gang status and became an outside man, his economic decline became more marked. The older outside man could expect to earn only about a half the amount enjoyed by his more fortunate workmates of the same age group in regular gangs. This is demonstrated in Chart IV.

CHART IV

Age Group	Median Earnings Regular Men	Median Earnings Outside Men	% of Outside Pay to Regular Pay
25 - 29	1,400	-	-
30 - 34	2,103	1,681	79.9
35 - 39	2,354	1,248	53.1
40 - 44	2,266	1,303	57.5
45 - 49	2,242	1,309	58.3
50 - 54	2,212	987	44.6
55 - 59	1,943	849	43.6
60 - 64	1,865	916	49.1

Once again differentials in earnings become apparent as age progresses. This applied in comparison of regular and outside earnings where differences between the two increased with age and also in a comparison of outside earnings considered before and after the 50 age point. This latter differential was particularly severe revealing a further 25% reduction in absolute terms in median earnings

after passing the age of 50.

We are now in some position to extrapolate from the figures some aspects of the career of longshoremen in St. John's.

It is apparent that in normal circumstances a young man entering the labour force had a relatively high chance of being inducted into membership of a regular gang. His most likely place of work lay in the hold where his physical prowess could help to ensure a rate of output satisfactory to the foreman. In his middle years he would almost certainly move to the shed where physical demands are less onerous. Here he would find his earnings begin to fall. The time he is off work through sickness would presumably increase (though no figures were able to be obtained on this matter since the cause of absences from work are not normally recorded amongst casual workers) and at the same time his opportunities for casual "hobble" jobs would diminish.

During these middle years his removal from the hold to the shed would also involve removal from what is commonly accepted as the main source of pilferage. Though it is impossible to quantify the different rates of pilferage between hold and shed, it is undoubtedly the case that illegitimate as well as legitimate earnings also decline with middle age. It is at this time of his life too that a longshoreman, hitherto in regular employment under a specific foreman, would suffer a heightened liability to lose his regular place. If this occurred he would find

that his income, previously in slow descent, would now fall rather more sharply (in 1963 this fall was to approximately one half of the pay of regular men in the same age group). It was likely that a typical longshoreman would remain in longshore employment until he was between 60 and 65, though he did not become liable for the Federal Government pension until the age of 70. With a much reduced opportunity of obtaining work at 65, therefore, he would be regarded as "burnt out" or "derelict" and leave waterfront employment though retaining membership in the Union.

Footnotes to Appendix 2

- (1) As would be expected, this was also found in the Manchester docks. (Liverpool University, 1954, p.266.)
- (2) There is no good reason why details of married men's earnings should have been collected rather than those of all men. This arose through a methodological oversight.
- (3) Earnings on these two wharves tended to be higher than those on the smaller wharves.

APPENDIX 3L.S.P.U. QUESTIONNAIRE 19641. Name

2. Age

30-35	()
35-40	()
40-45	()
45-50	()
50-55	()
55-60	()
60-65	()
65-70	()
70-75	()

3. Marital status

M	()
W	()
S1	()
Sep	()

4. Age of Wife

30-35	()
35-40	()
40-45	()
45-50	()
50-55	()
55-60	()
60-65	()
65-70	()
70-75	()

5. Religion

RC	()
C of E	()
U/C	()
Salv.	()
Other	()

6. Religion before marriage if different

RC	()
C of E	()
U/C	()
Salv.	()
Other	()

7. Wife's Religion

RC	()
C of E	()
U/C	()
Salv.	()
Other	()

8. Wife's Religion before marriage

RC	()
C of E	()
U/C	()
Salv.	()
Other	()

9. Religion of children

RC	()
C of E	()
U/C	()
Salv.	()
Other	()

9(a) Church Attendance

Once a week	()
Once a fortnight	()
Once a month	()
Every 3 months	()
Every 6 months	()
Once a year	()
Less than once a year	()

9(b) Wife's Church Attendance More than once a week ()
 Once a week ()
 Once a fortnight ()
 Once a month ()
 Every 3 months ()
 Every 6 months ()
 Once a year ()
 Less than once a year ()

10. How Long Married 5-10 () 11. Education None ()
 10-15 () Grade 3 ()
 15-20 () " 4 ()
 20-25 () " 5 ()
 25-30 () " 6 ()
 30-35 () " 7 ()
 35-40 () " 8 ()
 40-45 () " 9 ()
 " 10 ()
 " 11 ()

12. Current Residence Bla. () How Long 1 yr. or less ()
 S.S. () (Years) 1 - 2 ()
 Batt 3 ()
 E 4 ()
 W 5 ()
 C 5 - 8 ()
 M.P. 8 - 11 ()
 Other 11 - 15 ()

13. Prior Residence (1) How Long
 (Years) 1 yr. or less ()
 Bla. () 1 - 2 ()
 S.S. () 3 ()
 Batt 4 ()
 E 5 ()
 W 5 - 8 ()
 C 8 - 11 ()
 M.P. 11 - 15 ()
 Other ()

14. Prior Residence (2) How Long
 (Years) 1 yr. or less ()
 Bla. () 1 - 2 ()
 S.S. () 3 ()
 Batt 4 ()
 E 5 ()
 W 5 - 8 ()
 C 8 - 11 ()
 M.P. 11 - 15 ()
 Other ()

15. Prior Residence (3)How Long
(Years)

.....	Bla.	()	1 yr. or less	()
.....	S.S.	()	1 - 2	()
.....	Batt	()	3	()
.....	E	()	4	()
.....	W	()	5	()
.....	C	()	5 - 8	()
.....	M.P.	()	8 - 11	()
.....	Other	()	11 - 15	()

16. Prior Residence (4)How Long
(Years)

.....	Bla.	()	1 yr. or less	()
.....	S.S.	()	1 - 2	()
.....	Batt	()	3	()
.....	E	()	4	()
.....	W	()	5	()
.....	C	()	5 - 8	()
.....	M.P.	()	8 - 11	()
.....	Other	()	11 - 15	()

17. Prior Residence (5)How Long
(Years)

.....	Bla.	()	1 yr. or less	()
.....	S.S.	()	1 - 2	()
.....	Batt	()	3	()
.....	E	()	4	()
.....	W	()	5	()
.....	C	()	5 - 8	()
.....	M.P.	()	8 - 11	()
.....	Other	()	11 - 15	()

18. Born and/or Reared

.....	Bla.	()
.....	S.S.	()
.....	Batt	()
.....	E	()
.....	W	()
.....	C	()
.....	M.P.	()
.....	Other	()

19. Wife: Born and/or Reared

.....	Bla.	()
.....	S.S.	()
.....	Batt	()
.....	E	()
.....	W	()
.....	C	()
.....	M.P.	()
.....	Other	()

20. Residence with either
parent on marriage

Yes ()

No ()

Whose()

How Long ()

21. Father's occupation22. Wife's Father's occupation

23. Gang Foreman's Name Premises F/W { }
 F/P { }
 Other { }

Job Hold ()
 Winch ()
 Skids ()
 Deck ()
 Shore ()
 H.Checker ()

24. How Long with that Foreman Years: Under 1 ()
 1 - 2 ()
 2 - 3 ()
 3 - 5 ()
 5 - 8 ()
 8 - 11 ()
 11 - 15 ()
 15 + ()

25. Relatives in the Union

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Gang</u>	<u>Premises</u>
Father	()
Sons	()
	()
Grandsons	()
	()
Brother	()
	()
	()
Brother's Sons	()
	()
	()
	()
Sisters' Husbands	()
	()
	()
Sisters' Sons	()
	()
	()

25. Relatives in the Union (Cont.)

		<u>Name</u>	<u>Gang</u>	<u>Premises</u>
Wife's Father	()
Wife's Brothers	()
	()
	()
Wife's Sisters' Husbands	()
	()
	()
Wife's Sisters' Sons	()
	()
	()
Wife's Bros' Sons	()
	()
	()
Ego's Maternal Uncles	()
Ego's Paternal Uncles	()
Wife's Maternal Uncles	()
Wife's Paternal Uncles	()
Cousins - which	
Any other Relatives	

26. Clubs, Societies, Church Activities

Name	How Often
.....
"	" "
"	" "

27. Wife - Clubs, Societies, Church Activities

Name How Often
 " " "
 " " "

28. 2 Best Friends (inside or outside Union)

(A) Name LSPU () Non LSPU ()

Address Prior Address

Gang Premises

Job

(B) Name LSPU () Non LSPU ()

Address Prior Address

Gang Premises

Job

29. Leisure Activities with Friends

Which How Often
 " " "
 " " "

30. Other Leisure Activities

Which How often

Who with

Which How often

Who with

Which How often

Who with

31. Attendance at Union Hall

Most days	()
2 or 3 times a week	()
Once a week	()
Once a fortnight	()
Other	()

32. Visits to Friends' Homes

Whose With wife? How often LSPU?

" " " "

33. Visits by Friends to Ego's Home

Who With wife? How often LSPU?

" " " "

34. Outings with Wife

How often Where

35. Does Wife Work (Y) (N) How much

What at

36. Wife Knows Earnings? (Y) (N)

37. Household Division of Labour

Washing up	Cooking	Cleaning	
()	()	()	Most days
()	()	()	Once or twice a week
()	()	()	Once a week
()	()	()	Once a month
()	()	()	Rarely

38. Would you like your children to work L/S (Y) (N)

39. Do you think the Union will win its present troubles with the Employers?

.....

40. Do you like L/S work
 a) Aspects liked
 b) Aspects disliked
41. Worst Co. Why
 Best Co. Why
42. Are Foremen mostly Co. or Union Men?
 (Co.) (Un.)
43. What do you think of:
 1) Rotation of Gangs
 1a) Is it workable?
 2) Mingling of Gangs
 3) Cutting down of Gang size
 4) Sideloaders
 4a) Can sideloaders be kept out
 5) Affiliation. Within Mfld..... Outside Mfld
 6) Have you been out of Mfld. Where.....
44. Have you ever stood for Union Office (Y) (N)
 Successful (Y) (N)
 If not, why not
45. Prefers: 26 men with Flexibility ()
 Prefers: 21 men without Flexibility ()
46. Prefers: Rotation with 21 men ()
 Prefers: No rotation with 26 men ()
47. Prefers: Sideloaders with rotation ()
 Prefers: No sideloaders - no rotation ()
48. Prefers: No rotation - no flexibility ()
 Prefers: Rotation with flexibility ()

49. Alternative Employment (Y) (N)

(Take home pay) AT

£40	()
£45	{	}
£50	{	}
£55	{	}
£60	{	}
.....	()

50. Travel to Work Gang Premises

If by car - whose
 Other passengers
 " "
 " "

51. Children

	Sex	Eden.	Occupn. (or hus- bands)	M or Residence Area S
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....
Name	Age .....	.....	.....	.....

52. Did any of your children live with 'In Laws' or with you for any time after they were married53. Parents

Father alive (Y) (N)
 Mother alive (Y) (N)
 Residence Area
 With a relative Which

53. Parents (Cont.)

Last seen

54. Tel. No:

APPENDIX 4INTERMARRIAGE, AFFILIATION AND CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Of the sample's 65 married men, a third (21) had chosen a spouse from another denomination and 18 of these intermarriages were fertile. The chart reveals that affiliation of the children of intermarried parents within this haphazard sample predominantly follows a Protestant to Catholic direction. This applies irrespective of whether the father or mother had been reared an R.C. An exception that might be of interest in a larger and more systematic sample is the affiliation of children in cross Protestant marriages; all four examples here being seen to follow the father.

Conversion on marriage was not usual and none of the 21 men who had intermarried changed their religious affiliation. Of the 21 wives involved, the position of one was not determined; 15 maintained their original religious affiliation and 5 converted to the religion of their husbands. 3 of these converted to Roman Catholicism and 2 changed their allegiances within the overall Protestant rubric. Of the 7 Roman Catholic women who married Protestants, none changed their religious affiliation.

It is to be expected that Catholicism would successfully claim most children from marriages containing one Catholic spouse since official Catholic policy has until

very recently always been unequivocal on this matter.
 Protestant sects on the other hand have usually appeared
 to lack such firm policies.

INTERMARRIAGE :

AFFILIATION OF CHILDREN AND CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Husband R/C Wife Protestant	Children R/C	Children Protestant	Man's Church Attendance	Wife's Church Attendance
A		X	-	X
B	X		?	?
C	X		X	X
D	X		-	-
E		X	-	-
F	X		X	X
G	X		X	X

Husband Protestant Wife R/C	Children R/C	Children Protestant		
H	X		-	X
I	X		-	X
J		X	-	-
K	X		-	X
L	X		-	X
M	X		-	X
N	X		-	X

Husband Protestant Wife diff. Protestant	Children follow wife	Children follow husband		
O		X	-	X
P		X	X	-
Q		X	-	-
R		X	X	-

Note: Bs church attendance not determined.

When families are examined from the standpoint of church attendance it is found even among the intermarried, where conformity to religious values might be expected to be weakest, a very high percentage have at least one regular church going spouse. Out of 18 intermarried families containing children (see Chart), 14 could be so rated. In the wider sample - that is of couples who had married spouses from their own church - all the families possessed at least one regular attending parent.

Church attendance is seen, therefore, even among the possibly marginally involved - the intermarrieds - to be perceived as a necessary observance and one that appears to be of family rather than of individual concern. During administration of the questionnaire to the four intermarried men from non-attending families, D, E, J and Q, three spontaneously volunteered information that though neither parent attended church yet their children regularly attended.

APPENDIX 5FEDERAL LABOUR LAW AND PROCEDURES OF NEGOTIATION

With Confederation in 1949 waterfront industrial relations became subject to the Federal Industrial Relations Disputes and Investigation Act of 1948 by which the State lays down procedures for the settlement of disputes between Management and Labour. Failure to comply with provisions of the Act lays a party open to prosecution, and a Union President and members of his Executive are liable to imprisonment if their members do not comply with legally prescribed procedures. Though committal of Union officers is unlikely, there exists the most distinct possibility of a Union being fined for breaches of the Act.

The most important of the Act's provisions govern the extent and timing of strikes and lockouts which are prohibited unless the prescribed range of negotiations - from initial meetings to final receipt of a Conciliation Board's report - have been exhausted. The Act, therefore, limits a Union's ability to call a strike, or employers a lockout, except at the conclusion of specified negotiation procedures.

A second feature of Canadian Labour Legislation makes a contract between both sides of industry legally

binding. This granting of legal status to the contract means that a Union is liable to claims for damages in the case of, for instance, an unofficial strike, even though a stoppage may only be of short duration. In 1958, Union members walked off a cargo boat from Montreal. The employers claimed \$500 damages, because of a day's delay caused by the stoppage and threatened to sue the Union. On advice of its lawyer the Union immediately settled out of court for the full amount claimed. 112 members of four gangs were charged by the Union with breaking the contract, and each man fined \$5. Non payment would have resulted in suspension from the Union and a ban on waterfront employment which would not have been applied prior to 1948.

One important consequence of this legal enforceability of labour contracts is a concern with the minutiae of detail which is a feature of North American contract documents when compared to their British equivalents. It is usual for the whole range of both substantive and procedural rules to come under scrutiny each time a contract comes up for renewal.

A second consequence of legal enforceability affects the life of labour contracts. Since neither side is fully able to anticipate how a contract will operate in changing circumstances, neither side wishes to be bound by a contract that has no closing date.

In the port of St. John's contracts have usually had a specified life of a year. There are exceptions to this pattern, however. Where one side has a marked dominance in

negotiations it may impose a unilaterally beneficial contract. Such a situation pertained in 1958 when, after a lockout, the employers were able to impose a contract with a life of three years. A similar situation existed in 1964/5 when, after a second lockout lasting 285 days, the employers again imposed a contract having a three year life.

Procedure of contract negotiations

The Employer's Association and the Union each appoint a Negotiating Committee when revision of the contract is to be arranged.

If the Negotiating Committees of the two parties fail to reach agreement, they must by law proceed according to the Act, which lays down that before either party can call a 'lock-out' or a strike, they must petition the Minister of Labour to appoint a Conciliation Officer. His job is to move between the parties in an attempt to bring them together, but no more than this.

If the Conciliation Officer fails to bring the parties together, parties can petition the Minister of Labour to supervise a Conciliation Board comprising one appointee from each of the parties and the third to act as Chairman appointed by the other two. If the two parties fail to agree on the choice of a Chairman, the Minister of Labour has power to appoint one of his own choice. The Conciliation Board have no arbitral functions unless they are specifically asked by both sides to act as arbitrators. The

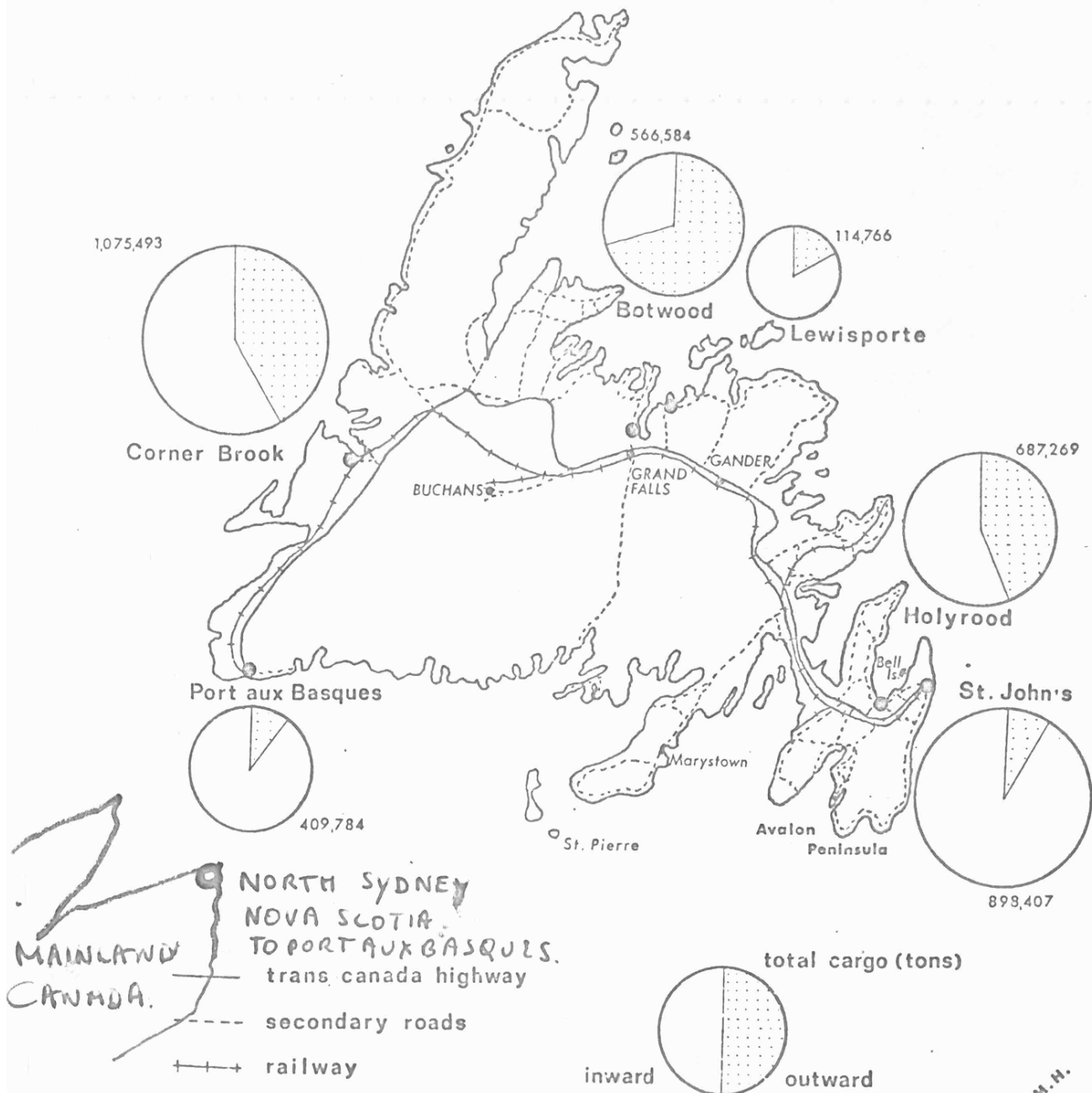
two functions of a Board are:

1. Primarily to conciliate
2. To act as a fact finding body.

On the conclusion of its hearing, the Conciliation Board submits a report to the Minister giving points on which it thinks agreement should be reached. Copies of this report are passed to the parties concerned. If then rejected, only then can men strike and employers 'lock-out'.

- 1) ST. JOHNS : SHOWING THE ESSENTIALLY UNLOADING NATURE OF THE PORT
- 2) NEWFOUNDLAND TRANSPORTATION NETWORK AND
- 3) MAJOR PORTS BY CARGO HANDLED (1966)

N.B. SHIPPING STATISTICS ARE UNRELIABLE PRIOR TO 1965 WHEN THE NATIONAL HARBOUR BOARD TOOK OVER ADMINISTRATION OF THE PORT OF ST. JOHNS.



Source: D.B.S. Shipping Statistics Vols. ii and iii. TAKEN AND ADAPTED FROM HARKNESS 1969.

St. Johns: City and Harbour

MAP 2



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